Chapter 171 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part eight

(Eren's PoV)

"Boss…" One of my subordinates called out to me.

"Are they finally gone…?" I asked him as I signed some important documents. I couldn't hide the expectations in my tone though.

"Well, yes." Finally! "But there were some strange people sighted in the city's square." My henchman told me.

"It must be the fault of those mad people. It's fine to leave it be now that the cause has left." I replied while heaving a sigh.

"Understood." He said.

Really now, dealing with that crazy woman was trouble enough, but then a bunch of insane migrants decided to gather here at once? It's good to have them around to protect the country when everyone in our surroundings is an enemy, but I prefer having 'normal' people near me over having to deal with migrants that have zero common sense!

"In any case, where did the mad woman's group go to?" I asked.

"Well… That is…" My subordinate staggered.

“Say it. Which small country is it this time?” I asked again.

“… They all went to Hermagne.” He replied.

“Bloody hell!” I exclaimed. That woman said that her goal was to take over the small countries first, then use that as a stepping stone to create enough national power to compete with the Kingdom of Hermagne and the Empire! So that she could eventually create a three-power hegemony! Where did that plan go to!?

Before I realized it, I was hitting my desk in frustration, “Boss, please calm down!” My henchman exclaimed.

… I sighed, took a deep breath, then said, “Give me more coffee.”

“Here…” A different subordinate gave me some… It wasn’t very good. I can’t complain about it much, since the person that is brewing it is more used to tea, but…

I sighed once again. Invading Hermagne, just what is that woman thinking…?

“Gather the soldiers and increase the city’s defense.” I ordered.

“Boss… Most of the soldiers were taken by that woman…” My henchman replied.

“Bloody hell!” I exclaimed again.

What is she thinking!? How are we supposed to protect the country without our forces! We barely have enough manpower to protect ourselves, let alone attack Hermagne! This nation was just created and we’re already on the verge of sinking!

“Boss, please calm down…” My subordinate asked again.

Deep breaths, deep breaths…

“Let’s start spreading rumors that we actually sent a token force to attack Hermagne, but that our main force is actually hidden and is waiting to ambush whoever tries taking advantage of the situation to attack us.” I ordered.

“But sir, will those rumors really spread fast enough to stop surrounding countries from attacking?” A different subordinate asked.

“They’ll have to. We still have plenty of people here that used to be from the Moonlight Family gang, so they better not have lost their ability to quickly spread false rumors, because we need this right now! Get moving!” I exclaimed.

Most of the subordinates in the room immediately left once I gave this order.

To think that that madwoman can give me stomachaches even when she’s out of the kingdom… Good grief.

At least, if this works out, we’ll actually get a pretty solid position. Having people from Hermagne brought here would definitely make it really hard for anyone to threaten us after all, so let’s hope that this bet from that madwoman works out somehow.

… Why did I have to get this role of king forced upon me? It’s so frustrating… I used to just be part of a gang, but now I have all this mess to deal with… And I can’t even try threatening that madwoman in any way, since she’s a migrant, so she has no family and can’t die, so… No way out of this hellish situation… It is truly divine mockery that brought the migrants to this world.

“Boss! It’s an emergency!” One of my subordinates ran inside the room while shouting that.

Immediately after, a number of migrants rushed inside, hitting the neck of the person that just gave me this warning… The assailants most likely got the people that just left to disseminate the false rumors too…

Perhaps I should try escaping… Or maybe it might be better to just die here.

“Don’t worry, I have not taken their lives.” The person that seems to be their leader said… He did hit the messenger with just his hands, so he may be saying the truth.

It’s a relief to see that he isn’t as crazy as that madwoman, but it’s also her fault that these migrants are here right now… Damn that woman!

“I am Sumeragi, leader of the Holy Imperial Knights. You may remember me from the time when I fought together with Saintess Maria to save the princess.” Their commander said.

“Huh? Don’t remember seeing any face as ugly as yours. Beat it.” I told him.

… I did actually remember the people that forced that madwoman to blow up the mansion, but I’m not going to acknowledge this guy.

“I see… Regardless of that, I’d rather avoid being too rough, so would you please come with us?” He asked me.

“Hey, more coffee.” I gestured to one of my subordinates while showing off my empty cup.

“Yes sir!” One of them hurriedly refilled the cup.

Then, I started signing some unimportant documents, since I had already taken care of the more urgent ones.

After a while of that, the knight guy decided to try again, “I have business with you, Eren. So could you please come, obediently? I’d rather have this be solved peacefully.”

“This isn’t a playground, get lost. Can somebody escort these children to where the toys are?” I loudly asked my subordinates, who started laughing. Some even threw rubber bands towards the knights.

“… I did not come here to play.” The knight said.

“Oh, so rude! Did your mom not teach you to accept gifts properly?” I asked him, which made my subordinates laugh louder.

It was nice to have a change of pace and give them some laugher. We’ve basically been unable to relax ever since that madwoman threw the job of ruling the city on us, and we now have a whole kingdom to manage… Having some knights that silently endure mockery coming to kidnap me is being a surprisingly happy occasion.

Eventually though, the knight leader seemed to be reaching his limits, “I really would rather avoid a fight, if possible.” he said.

One of my subordinates tried to move closer to mock him, but the knight punched his face, knocking my henchman down.

“This is the last warning. Please come with us, obediently.” The knight leader said.

“Get lost. Last warning for you too.” I told him.

Then, I finished drinking my cup of coffee, gave the empty cup to a subordinate, then got up from my desk… Doing paperwork all the time was getting me rusty anyways. Might as well do some exercise to relieve all the stress caused by that madwoman.

“Don’t regret your decisions.” The knight leader said.

“I have one decision that I regret, and I hate it with all my guts. I’m not making the same mistake again.” I told him.

“You may be making another mistake just now.” The knight leader said.

“I’ve never repeated mistakes in my life.” I replied.

… This is a pretty disadvantageous situation though. I wonder if there is anything we can even do here.

Chapter 172 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part nine

(Eren's PoV)

"I'm sorry, please forgive me!" I bowed down to the Sumeragi guy and apologized to him.

"That's why I said you might regret it…" He sighed, crossed his arms, then said this while looking down on me, who begged for forgiveness, "To think just a few hits would be enough… I suppose NPCs can't really stand up to top players after all."

"Yes, yes! I'm sorry! I was stupid!" I exclaimed. I dunno what top player and NPC mean, but it's better to just agree with him for now, "But it couldn't be helped! I was threatened by that Rena person!"

"Oh, the Genocider…?" He asked.

"Yes! That madwoman is doom incarnate!" I said. It felt like blaming her was the easiest way out since she seems to be a celebrity of sorts… Sumeragi seems to be buying it, "How about it? We might be able to deceive and defeat her by working together!"

"… Sure. She is way too wild, and I do still resent her for killing the tutorial uncle." Sumeragi replied. I dunno who is this tutorial uncle, but I guess it's his acquaintance? I wonder how many people have a grudge against her…

"Then it's settled! You should be able to approach her easily if you're with me!" I exclaimed.

“I suppose she wouldn’t be wary of being spoken to the leader of her own country…” He mused.

“Then it’s settled! Let’s go!” I rose my face and started walking, moving past him.

“Okay, just… Don’t do anything strange, alright?” He told me.

“Of course!” Then, as soon as I got in position, I exclaimed, “<Dark Purple Grip>!” and crushed his crotch with my strength that is enhanced by the skill!

“What the…?” He must be panicking right now.

“You like it, don’t you? Someone touching your balls?” I mocked him.

“Damn you…” And then, just at this moment, he looked around, probably hoping for his knight lackeys to help him out, only to realize that they were all on the ground already.

“Finally noticed it, idiot!” I exclaimed, “<Camouflage> had been activated since you entered the room!”

He really thought that his subordinates had defeated mine once we had started fighting, but in fact his allies were all fighting one another all along! He totally fell for our trap!

“Just who is going to regret it now!?” I asked him.

“<Defensive Circular Wind Blades>” As he said that, a bunch of wind blades flew around him, so I was forced to jump away, freeing him from my restraint, “Let me just ask you this… Where did your subordinates go to?”

He is asking this now?

… I guess it’s fine to answer. It’s not like he can do anything with this information anyways, “They ran away. Most of them were civilians, so it couldn’t be helped.” After all, the servants of the former Margrave Wallace

have no reason to follow me, so I was only left with the people who were unable to fight, and the guys from the Moonlight Family.

“I see… And yet, you still wish to resist?” He asked me.

“Or what? You scared of more ball play or something?!” I asked him back. I’d prefer if he just went home without a fight, but with this country getting more and more enemies due to that madwoman’s actions, I doubt he’ll give up this easily.

“You have angered me. Prepare yourself.” Sumeragi entered battle positions.

“I see! You actually want more ball play then! In that case… Bye!” I then turned around and started running.

“What!?” He exclaimed, but I didn’t wait for his reaction and kept on running through the corridors. His goal is to capture me, and mine is to not get caught, so I have no reason to have an honest face-to-face fight, “Wait, coward!”

“Who’d wait, stupid?!” I asked him back.

By now he had already started chasing me, but we were running through narrow corridors on my home turf, so I had the advantage… Things would have been different if his 5 subordinates hadn’t beaten each other, but I guess they un but I guess they underestimated me for being an ‘NPC’ or something.

“Catch!” I exclaimed as I threw a ball towards him.

“What will you do with such a-” He wasn’t able to finish his sentence though.

“Ha, idiot! You really let that hit the back of your head!” I shouted. All I had to do was throw the ball at the right angle and let it kick the walls and ceilings a few times, and it hit his head just fine. Too easy!

“Just what are you doing…?” He asked.

“Playing with my toys!” I answered while showing him another of those bouncy balls, “How many do you think you can handle while moving through these narrow corridors?!”

“You can’t be serious…” He commented.

While laughing at his reaction, I used <Rotate>, <Ricochet>, <Heavy Blow>, <Accelerate> and <Shadow Double> on the balls.

“So let me ask you… How much do you like playing with balls?!” I asked while throwing a bunch towards with him while using <Meteor Shower>.

“You’re really good at angering me!” He exclaimed.

Chapter 173 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part ten

(Eren's PoV)

"<Heavenly Decapitation>!" Sumeragi exclaimed.

I used the <Dark Purple Flowing Wall> skill to parry his long-range attack and throw it towards the ceiling though. Then, I used <Killer's Juggle> skill to throw multiple rubber balls towards him in a confusing pattern.

"<Coiling Dragon>!" However, he moved his sword with a skill that left a dragon-like aftereffect from its movement and blocked my attack.

"Not bad, boy!" I exclaimed while still running from him.

"Just how many corridors does this mansion has? It feels like we've been running for eternity…" He asked me.

"A mafia base will, of course, have some secrets, fool!" I told him.

"I guess I shouldn't have expected a proper answer…" He commented while sighing.

"You know, the base is only like that because a certain madwoman blew up the original mansion of the city's lord…" I said.

"… I'm sorry." He replied.

Well… At least he seems to feel a bit of guilt from it, since he was involved in the attack that made her blow up the whole place… It's nice that someone has a bit of sense.

However… "If you're sorry, then leave! This is the new home for the lord now! And you're invading it! <Moonlight Rabbits>!" I exclaimed.

"<Flying Z Cut>!" He used his sword to start cutting the purple flying rabbits that I threw at him… However, their real goal wasn't to hit him directly, but to instead throw even more rubber balls in even harder to keep up patterns than before! "Agh! Just how many of those are you planning on throwing!?" He exclaimed as another ball hit the back of his head. Bullseye!

"You keep on looking more and more stupid each time you're hit!" I told him while laughing, "What now? Are you going to cry to your mom?"

He had stopped running for a bit and seemed to be shaking, so I taunted him like that, though he was probably just angry and frustrated at it… But then, he exclaimed, "Y-you dummy! I'm really angry now!"

"Eh…?" Wait, was he trying to insult me or something? Is that the best he can come up with?

"Prepare yourself!" He shouted… Just how old is this knight captain again? He really feels like a child now, "<Body Transcendence: Sacred Knight>!"

"Oh… Did I go too far?" I tried throwing one of the leftover poisonous smoke bombs that Rena left here, but Sumeragi created a strong wind that scattered the poison gas, "Guess it can't be helped then… <Body Permeation: Moonlight Cover>"

"Eh…!? Bo-<Body Transcendence: Storm Knight>!" He used next. Seems like he was surprised I could also strengthen myself.

"<Body Sublimation: Laughing Clown>!" I used next.

"<Spiritual Transcendence: Divine Guidance>!" He used.

“<Spiritual Sublimation: Emotional Outburst>!” I used.

As we strengthened ourselves, we were still running through the narrow corridors and throwing attacks at one another.

“<Ex Enchantment: Physical Might>; <Ex Enchantment: Physical Barrier>; <Ex Enchantment: Accelerate>; <Ex Enchantment: Sacred Brilliance>; <Ex Enchantment: Regeneration Storm>” He used all those next, so I followed suit.

“<Ex Enchantment: Physical Might>; <Ex Enchantment: Accelerate>; <Ex Enchantment: Dexterity>; <Ex Enchantment: Evil Spirit>; <Ex Enchantment: Conqueror’s Flame>” Were my strengthening skills.

Our attacks were becoming more and more intense with each strengthening skill that we used. Even the rubber balls were starting to shave off a part of the walls and ceiling when they bounced on those. Not to mention how much damage Sumeragi’s sword swings caused… It’s good that this guy has some common sense, differently from that madwoman, or this building would have collapsed by now.

“<Divine Oath: I am the sword of the empire>!” He started.

“<Divine Oath: Laughter in the dark night>!” I also didn’t hold back.

“<Divine Oath: I am the shield of the empire>!” He finished his oath.

“<Divine Oath: I’m a clown>!” And so did I.

———

Race: Saint

Name: Sumeragi Lv.92 <+30>

Karma: 277 <Extremely Good>

Class: Divine Knight; Second Class: Storm Knight; Third Class: Holy Priest

Status:

Justice: <Attack power increases when fighting for your own justice: Large>

Holy Knight: <STR, INT Increase: Extra Large; Light Attribute added to attacks: Max; Light Damage Increase: Max>

Storm Knight: <STR, VIT Increase: Extra Large; Thunder Attribute added to attacks: Max; Thunder Damage Increase: Max>

Divine Guidance: <INT, DEX Increase: Extra Large; Physical Damage Increase: Max; Adds random chance of activating Physical Skills when attacking>

Protector: <Increased Resistance to Status Aliments: Large>

Defeat the Enemy of God: <Damage Increase Against Evil Enemies: Large; Continuous HP Recovery: Medium; Increases Stats based on how low the Karma of your enemy is: Small>

Storm Might: <Thunder Attributed Added to attacks: Medium; Attack Power Increase: Medium>

Storm Protection: <Increased Thunder Resistance: Medium; Increased Defense: Medium>

Holy Might: <Light Attributed Added to attacks: Medium; Attack Power Increase: Medium>

Holy Protection: <Increased Light Resistance: Medium; Increased Defense: Medium>

Guardian: <AGI, VIT Increase: Extra Large>

Humanity's Ally: <Max HP Increase: Extra Large; Increased Effectiveness of Recovery Effects: Extra Large>

Attributes Added to Attacks: <Light, Thunder: Max>

Enhancements: <STR, VIT, AGI Increase: Max>

Enhancements: <Slash, Blunt, Hit Chance, Dodge Chance Increase: Large>

Divine Oath – Holy Warrior: <STR, VIT Increase: Max; Damage Increase Against Evil Enemies: Max; All Stats Increase When Fighting Evil Enemies: Max; Continuous HP Loss: 3%/1s>

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Important NPC

Name: Eren Claudia Wallace Lv.101 <+30 >

Karma: -512 <Very Evil>

Class: Shade; Second Class: Laughing Clown; Third Class: Emotional Instability

Status:

Play: <Attack Power Increases when mocking someone: Large>

Moonlight Cover: <INT, AGI Increase: Extra Large; Dark Attribute Added to Attacks: Max; Dodge Chance Increase: Max>

Laughing Clown: <STR, DEX Increase: Extra Large; Dark Attribute Added to Attacks: Max; Dark Damage Increase: Max>

Emotional Outburst: <STR, INT, AGI, DEX Increase: Large; Physical Damage Increase: Max; Adds random chance of activating Physical Skills when attacking>

Protector: <Increased Resistance to Status Aliments: Large>

Defeat the Enemy of God: <Damage Increase Against Good Enemies: Large; Continuous HP Recovery: Medium; Increases Stats based on how high the Karma of your enemy is: Small>

Dark Might: <Dark Attributed Added to attacks: Medium; Attack Power Increase: Medium>

Dark Protection: <Increased Dark Resistance: Medium; Increased Defense: Medium>

Fire Might: <Fire Attributed Added to attacks: Medium; Attack Power Increase: Medium>

Fire Protection: <Increased Fire Resistance: Medium; Increased Defense: Medium>

Guardian: <AGI, VIT Increase: Extra Large>

Selfishness: <Max HP Increase: Extra Large; Increased Effectiveness of Recovery Effects: Extra Large>

Attributes Added to Attacks: <Dark, Fire: Max>

Enhancements: <STR, AGI, DEX Increase: Max>

Enhancements: <Throw Power, Blunt, Hit Chance, Dodge Chance Increase: Large>

Divine Oath – Dancing Clown: <STR, DEX Increase: Max; Damage Increase Against Good Enemies: Max; All Stats Increase When Fighting Good Enemies: Max; Continuous HP Loss: 3%/1s>

Notes:

Leader of the Moonlight Family

Margrave Wallace (Fake)

King of the Wallace Kingdom

Puppet King

God’s Clown

Apostle of Chaos

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“What the hell are you…?” Sumeragi asked me.

“You ready? I still have a lot of work to do once we’re done.” I asked him back.

We were both staring at each other with our weapons held high.

And then, I exclaimed, “Hurry up and die!”

“I’ll definitely defeat you!” He shouted back.

Chapter 174 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part eleven

(Sumeragi's PoV)

As I fought with Eren for a while longer, I realized that, "Those rubber balls really don't do much damage in the end… And in that case, <Ex Regeneration> should now completely solve the issue caused by them." I told Eren. I still have to deal with the HP loss from the Divine Oath, but it should only be a matter of time for him to lose when my damage output is higher.

"Is that so…? Then how about this!? <Heavy Juggle>!" He exclaimed.

"For how long do you think this kind of thing will work!? <Rolling Slash>!" I countered his attack with this skill, cutting through the rubber balls and quickly moving closer to him.

There were a bit too many of those rubber balls though, so I decided to ignore some in order to close the distance between us… However, just as I made this decision, my <Super Intuition> skill made me react in time, just as a purple rabbit pierced the floor in the space that I was in just a second ago.

"Not bad, boy!" Eren exclaimed.

"You were using a camouflage skill!?" I asked him.

"Who knows? <Moonlight Herd>!" He used a new skill.

“<Sunlight Stab>!” I used this to cut through some strange dark mist that he was summoning, but the current situation still looks troubling… I have been using detection skills since the start of the battle, yet I’m still being confused by his antics. He must have some really strong camouflage there.

“Look up! <Moonlight Rabbits>!” As he cast this, more purple rabbits came out, and started trying to attack me from above.

“<Holy Rupture>!” I slashed through the rabbit just before it reached me, but… “A rubber ball!?” I was sure it was a rabbit!

“Pay attention, boy!” Eren exclaimed this as he hit my stomach with his elbow… When did he get this close!?

“E-<Ex Heal>!” I hurriedly cast to recover from the damage.

“Do you think you have the time for that!? <Meteor Shower>!” He exclaimed, throwing more rubber balls towards me.

“<Piercing Rosary>!” By using this, I threw multiple light beams towards the incoming rubber balls, but they just seemed to split up when the light hit them… Were those illusions? Which of them was real then?

It was hard to be sure, so I kept on intercepting as many as possible while relying on my detection skills, but it was still hard to not make any mistakes when there were so many of those… They’re still just rubber balls, but I’ll lose if I can’t land any hit while he whittles away my HP like this…

“Come on, boy! Can’t even realize which balls are the real one!?” Eren laughed out loud while saying this.

This was rough… Due to how weak each individual rubber ball is, the detection skills didn’t assign them a high priority, so it was easy for them to slip past me… And a single sword isn’t the best weapon to handle multiple ranged attacks while fighting in a narrow corridor…

“Seems like I have no choice…” I mused to myself.

“Oh? Still have some fighting spirit in you?” He asked me while still keeping that mocking smile in his face.

I took a deep breath, and decided to not hold back any longer, “You have lost on the moment you decided to fight in such narrow passages! <Premium Item: The Truth of Tomorrow>; <Light’s Breath>!”

“W-what!?” Was all that he could exclaim as I activated my trump card. The premium item that allowed me to skip the chant of the <Oracle> skills. In this corridor, there is no way that he can dodge this large blast.

And like this, I blew up not just Eren, but a good part of the building’s walls and ceiling.

“You really were way stronger than I thought… It couldn’t be helped.” I said to nobody in particular. I didn’t want to kill him, but I was running out of time because of the <Divine Oath>, so I had to do this…

I crouched down and stabbed my sword on the ground. This NPC… I thought he was just Rena’s pawn, but he was actually quite strong, “I need to be more careful next time.”

“About that, you’ll have no next time.” That was Eren’s voice.

… And the feeling in my chest… Was of a dagger stabbing through it.

I turned around and saw that Eren was holding it. He was right behind me, stabbing me with his dagger.

“You’re really… Amazing.” I commented as I saw my life points quickly disappearing.

“That I am.” He replied.

“But… How are you alive?” I asked him. He really should have had no way of surviving an Oracle skill of all things. Especially when his karma is that low, the damage should have been far too high…

“You were just too caught up on playing with balls, boy.” Was all that he said as a reply.

“I see…” I get it now. It was an illusion. He mixed himself up with his rabbits and balls, and I ended up missing… Damn it. I didn’t notice it at all.

And then, I saw my HP hitting 0.

******

(Eren’s PoV)

“Boss, you done?” One of my henchmen, who was supposed to have fled, asked.

“Just finished.” I answered.

“I was only able to catch one of them alive. What do I do with him?” He asked me, then put one of Sumeragi’s knights on the ground. The knight was tied up and was dragged here through the neck.

“Did you erase the evidences of what happened in my room?” I asked him just in case.

“Of course.” He answered.

“Then it’s all good.” I told him, then looked towards the knight. He seemed to be pretty terrified right now.

“Please let me go! I surrender! I give up! Please cancel the battle, I can’t log-out!” He started shouting some incomprehensible things.

… He doesn’t seem to be very useful.

I sighed, then looked around, seeing that quite a few of my henchmen were coming out of their hiding spots, “Hang him.” I told them.

“Understood.” One of my subordinates said.

“No! Please stop! Help me!” The knight exclaimed, but was dragged away without anyone caring about his words.

Then, I took out a pipe and started smoking a bit while the migrant screamed for mercy. At the same time, my subordinates were telling him about how this was his punishment for trying to go against the mafia.

Ignoring that, I started walking away while reflecting on everything that just happened… In the end, it’s all that madwoman’s fault, isn’t it? All the problems in my life come from her…

Just as I started thinking this, my stomachache started coming back… I wonder if someone can replace me on this job.

I sighed. It’s been a while since I last had an opportunity to ‘play’… I should take a break and relax now.

Chapter 175 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part twelve

“Hey, what are you planning on doing with all those guys?” As we moved towards the capital of Hermagne, Hannes asked me this question while pointing towards the soldiers that were walking behind us.

“I have also been wondering about this for a while now…” Ranka commented.

“Oh, them? They’ll be doing guerilla warfare once we get inside the capital. They don’t have enough training nor numbers to fight against Hermagne’s army head-on, so we’ll just drop them inside and let them do their own thing. Most of them were previously members of the Moonlight Family gang, so they should be able to manage this much.” I explained.

“Wh-what?!” Hannes exclaimed.

“What is the problem?” I asked him.

“I mean… I get the idea, but there are way too many of them. There’s no way that the capital’s guards will just let them go inside easily. We’ll be seen from the people on lookout on top of the walls and they’ll be waiting for us with the entire army of the capital ready for battle…” Hannes said. Ranka also nodded to his comment, seeming to agree with his view.

And well, they were right about the fact that it was unreasonable to barge from the front door with this many soldiers behind us, but… “That’s not a problem.” I told them.

“… Then how are you planning on getting inside the capital while having a mini-army behind you?” Hannes asked.

“Yeah, even it’s Geno… Even it’s Rena, there shouldn’t be a way to get this many people inside the city safely.” Ranka commented.

“Well, the main problem is that capital’s lookouts will see us from above while we’re still far, so they’ll be able to properly prepare their defenses by the time we get there, right?” I asked them, to which they nodded, “Therefore, all we have to do, is to invade from even further above, where their eyes won’t catch us.”

“Are you stupid…?” Hannes asked after a small pause.

“Oh wow… So that’s what the Genocider is like…” Ranka said.

I’m not stupid though, I’ve been pretty diligent with my studies.

… I don’t get the resigned look in Ranka’s face though.

“Oh, beloved Maria! Soon enough, we’ll be together! Please wait for me, I’ll show you all the love that you deserve, Saintess Maria! Let me fully devote my worship to your infinite grace!” And that’s the kind of thing that Hymn’s Guru was saying while we were talking about the soldiers… He is kinda annoying.

******

(Lily’s PoV)

After everyone left to Hermagne, I ended up having nothing to do, so I took care of some leftover work… However, Lily is really worried about Tapiocaman, so even if she knows that she might cause trouble, she ended up deciding to run after them, for the sake of being together with her very precious person.

Hannes will probably sigh at it, but Reina actually seems to be in a pretty good mood, so I think she’ll forgive me for it… And even if not, it’s fine if I just enjoy myself, right? Lily is a good girl who even taught Hymn’s Guru

what he needed to do in order to achieve his goals, so of course everyone will be happy to have Lily by their side, right?

Then, onwards! To Belzenstock City!

Chapter 176 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part thirteen

(PoV of a Guard of Hermagne)

“Hey… Do you think that the second prince’s… That the new king’s policy is a sane one? Allowing this many migrants inside the kingdom?” I asked my guard comrade while we were on lookout.

“I don’t know if it’s sane, but… If you start badmouthing him, you might end up in trouble.” My friend advised me.

“I know, but… Migrants created so many troubles to us already. Why let even more inside!?” I asked.

“I mean, we are in need of more manpower.” My comrade shrugged.

“But that’s putting us all in danger!” I exclaimed.

“Stop it, before someone takes you away…” He advised me.

I took a deep breath, then said, “I’m sorry, it’s just… The antidote to cure my wife from whatever poison the migrants inflicted her with was so expensive…”

“It’s okay, I understand your feelings… They had to not only attack us with poisons, but also cut our contact with the sea… It’s so hard to get anything

for a proper price now that we lost Belzenstock.” He sighed while making this comment. Things really were rough right now…

As I was about to reply to his comment, I noticed something strange…
“Hey, what is that? A flock of migratory birds?” I asked him while looking up.

******

(Rena’s PoV)

“Hey, are you really going to do this…?” Hannes asked me.

“But of course.” I answered.

We were far enough from Hermagne’s capital that we couldn’t even see it yet… In this location, Kageyama stretched its shadow while using <Materialization> and <Hardening>. At the same time, Hymn’s Guru used <Quicksand> and put it on top of the shadow path. Like this, the shadow path could be maintained even if I didn’t throw smoke bombs high up.

It was a bit annoying to get Hymn’s Guru to cooperate though, since he seemed to be unable to hear us at all in the middle of his incessant talks about Maria, who isn’t even here… That said, once Ranka slapped him a few times, he started hearing us, so we ended up coming up with this setup.

“Alright, is everyone ready?” I asked… Nobody replied, so, “I’ll take that as a yes! Let’s go!”

Then, I used <Jet Propulsion> and <Accelerate> to make Jun, in motorcycle form, move as fast as possible. Our group was all on top of Jun, while the soldiers, who were split in four different groups, were tied behind us with threads.

And like this, we ran through the skies at an amazing speed!

“You damned woman!” Hannes shouted.

“I want my mom!” Ranka exclaimed.

“I’m coming, Saintess Maria!” Hymn’s Guru exclaimed.

… They’re so loud. Why can’t they be like Tapiocaman, who is calmly sitting in his spot.

“I’m already seeing the capital! Prepare yourselves, everyone!” I exclaimed, mostly to the soldiers behind us.

“Slow down!” Hannes shouted, but I ignored him.

… Though I was a bit surprised by how quickly we were approaching the city. Seems like the last few levels and skill levels I obtained ended up making quite the difference.

While I wondered about that, we were already crossing above the Western gate of the Royal Capital, “First Group, it’s your cue!” I told the soldiers, then untied one of the threads from Ponko.

The first batch of soldiers started falling down, but with Inoue’s and Yamada’s buffs on them, paired together with their fall being slowed down a bit by me holding the thread that was tying them up, they should be able to survive.

“They’ll die!” Hannes exclaimed.

“Lord Buddha, please let their souls safely return to the cycle of reincarnation…” Ranka prayed.

… The soldiers did fall pretty harshly on the ground, but they still seemed to be alive. They probably lost 20% of their HP or something, which is within the acceptable range.

“Alright, next squad!” I exclaimed, and started dropping the other groups in the same way as we moved through the South, East and North gates of the city.

Then, with all soldiers deployed, I said, “Alright, you all ready? Let’s get off!”

“Ah, I don’t care anymore! Just do whatever you want!” Hannes exclaimed.

Ranka started chanting Buddhist sutras again.

“This vertical descent trajectory must be the ideal one to bring me closer to lady Maria…” Hymn’s Guru mused… He really is kinda annoying.

Oh well, everyone seemed to be ready, even if Lily isn’t here with us, so… Let’s jump off!

As I jumped, I took out a sphere that I had made to ‘play’, but didn’t have a chance to use until now.

“Just what is that!?” Hannes asked me.

“You’ll see.” I told him. It was faster to show it than explain it anyways.

Then I threw the sphere towards the center of the capital and… Boom! A large explosion took over the capital!

… A really large one. This was a bit of an experimental explosive using Hydrogen and Oxygen, so I knew it was going to have a lot of firepower to it, but I didn’t expect it to be this big. For a moment it was as if the sun was right in front of our eyes… When in fact, it was just my explosion.

However, I wasn’t really hurt by it… In fact, Hannes actually hugged me and protect me from the brunt of the explosion.

Well, I guess I should drink a potion just in case.

“I think I might have overdone it a bit…” I commented.

“You definitely did.” Hannes told me.

Then, I looked around, and saw that the other three people of our group were safely falling towards the city as well.

Chapter 177 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part fourteen

As we ran towards the royal castle, a strong man that was over 2 meters tall stood in our way and exclaimed, “Stop!”

“Who are you?” I asked him.

“I’m the Supreme Commander of Hermagne’s Royal Guard. The name is Adolf M. Southcloud.” He replied.

“Oh, a supreme commander?” That’s exciting! It’s been a while since I’ve fought a strong NPC.

However, Hannes and Ranka were already readying their weapons, this is a bit troublesome…

“What business do you have with us?” I asked him.

“I’ve come to put an end to the scum that spit on the honorable history of this country.” He said while also readying his weapon. Seems like he is willing to fight to the death.

I really want to have him for myself, but with everyone else here… What should I do?

Oh, right! Yuu and Maria did tell me about some lines that should be used in this kind of situation.

“Leave him to me. You all go on ahead.” I told them.

I’m relatively good at copying others’ behaviors, so this should have been good enough, right?

“Hey, Ichi… I mean, Rena… Will you be alright?” Hannes asked me.

Success! Just like Yuu and Maria said! The ‘No, I can’t leave you behind’ scene! In that case, the follow up is… “Do not waste my efforts! Hurry up! I’ll be fine even if I die!”

“Just what kind of ‘play’ is it this time…?” Hannes sighed when he said this.

… That’s a bit troublesome. This was supposed to be the part where they had an internal struggle over going or not, right? I don’t really know what to do if he doesn’t follow the script.

“What makes you think I will let them pass this easily?” The Supreme Commander asked. To that, I giggled, “What’s so funny?” He asked me next.

He advanced the scene for me! Does this mean he also wants a single combat? This is so convenient, let’s keep on going like this then, “Ah, well, it’s just… Your righteousness is making me remember the dying faces of the king and of the crown prince.”

“Oh… So you… I see… So you are the devil that ruined this country.” He commented.

Just as planned! If the enemy says something like, ‘I won’t let any of you escape’, then all I need to do is taunt him, so that he only cares about me!

And right now, the eyes of the Supreme Commander were filled with anger, and focused entirely on me.

Now, for the finishing touch, “Well, that’s how it is.” Then, without taking my eyes off the enemy, I said, “Hannes, there is a reason you wanted to come to Hermagne, isn’t there?”

“Ah, well…” Hannes started saying, but I didn’t wait for him to make a proper sentence.

“I don’t mind dropping out of the event here, because this looks fun. This ridiculously strong Important NPC. The Supreme Commander of Hermagne… He is mine, so you go on ahead.” I told him.

Moreover, it seems like the management team decided to greatly increase the strength of the NPCs after I killed Alexei, Ronove, and caused a lot of Chaos here in Hermagne. Not to mention how NPCs are supposed to naturally increase in power as the players advance through the game… So, right now, this NPC right in front of me must be a real challenge.

“I mean… Is it really alright to raise so many death flags?” Hannes asked.

“We should go! We cannot waste her efforts!” Tapiocaman suddenly exclaimed, then he picked up Hannes and started running ahead.

“W-what?! What are you doing, Tapiocaman?! Stop this!” Hannes exclaimed, but Tapiocaman did not stop at all… Perfect! Just like Yuu and Maria said it would happen! This was quite the important knowledge that they taught me.

“I wonder who will win… the Genocider, or the Death Flag army that she raised… Not even a Guru like me can know that.” Hymn’s Guru said that while following Tapiocaman.

“Let’s ask for Buddha’s grace to guide her path.” Ranka said while moving after them as well.

“What are you all even saying!?” Hannes asked.

“Listen up-!” Tapiocaman started saying something, but I couldn’t hear them anymore… I was a bit worried that they seemed to be arguing, but I guess it’s fine for as long as they get inside the Royal Castle.

… Wait. Did Hymn’s Guru just run in a completely different direction? Where is he going…?

“Did you finish talking, evil little girl?” The supreme commander asked me.

“That’s so kind of you to wait… Though if you weren’t so slow to act, maybe your lord might still be alive.” I told him.

It truly is wonderful that the enemy really does conveniently wait for us to finish our conversation. The trove of knowledge that comes from Yuu and Maria cannot be underestimated.

Now all I need to do, is make sure that he is fighting without holding back, going all-out to kill me, “Or rather, both lords might still be alive.” I told him.

“I’ll apologize to them once my time has ended and I join them in the afterlife.” Then, as soon as he said that, he rushed towards me and swung his Naginata.

He was quite fast, and I was almost unable to react to it, but I parried his attack with my shortsword in the nick of time.

I giggled once more, “Been a while since I felt like this… I’ll enjoy this battle.”

“I’ll destroy you so thoroughly that not even a corpse will be left.” The supreme commander said.

——

Important NPC

Name: Adolf M. Southcloud Lv.121

Karma: 0 <Loyal>

Class: Commander of the Black Dragons; Second Class: Knight of the White Panthers; Third Class: Strategist of the Green Owls

Status:

Avenger: <Attack Power increases when fighting for revenge: Large>

Notes:

Former Head of the Southcloud County.

Supreme Commander of Hermagne's Royal Guard

General of Hermagne's Army

Strongest Person of Hermagne

Cool Old Man

——-

He really is quite strong. It's my first serious battle against an NPC since Ronove… So exciting! How should we 'play' today? We have big difference in level, so I'll have to be creative here.

"Let's enjoy this!" I exclaimed.

"I cannot deny that I am enjoying the opportunity of avenging my lord." The supreme commander replied… Well, it's fine if I'm the only one excited.

******

(Maria's PoV)

Me and Yuu were silently walking back to our home country, Hermagne, while carrying NPCs from another country with us… The silence was painful. I want to make up with him already, but it's so hard to be honest about it after fighting like that…

I didn't really mean to get into this big quarrel, but when Yuu said he was tired of being with me, I just… No, no! Not like that! I can't make up with him with this kind of thinking!

Let’s do this! I can’t let this quarrel go on any longer!

“Uhn…” We both said in unison.

“Ah, I mean, that is…” We both said together again.

… And now we were silent.

Yuu also wants to make up, right? He’s been glancing my way for a while now, but… My courage just disappeared after this last exchange…

We sighed. Both of us sighed at the same time.

It’s always like this. It can’t be helped that we quarreled, but to take this long to make up is ridiculous… No, I can’t let our relationship remain like this! I’m not going to let this quarrel stand in our way any longer!

“Hey, Oda! No, Yuu!” I exclaimed.

“W-whoa?! W-what is it!?” He asked me.

Shouting seems to have worked at least. Even if it startled him, it’s fine… I can’t say if this is the ideal way to make up, but… “I just… I just wanted to say I might have said too much… And that… That I’m sorr-”

“I’ve come to save you, Saintess Maria!” Suddenly, I heard a loud shout, and I was now being dragged away from Yuu at a very high speed.

“Wh-what the!? Who are you!? Why are you carrying me like this!?” I asked him.

“Oh, lady Maria! Please allow me touch your beautiful pure body!” He exclaimed.

“Wait, what!? No! Stop that! That’s sexual harassment! Get me down!” I have no idea what was happening, but somehow this guy was flying away with me! Why!? And why is he calling me ‘lady’ of all things!?

“What are you talking about, my lady!? Players can also be kidnapped in this event!” The kidnapper said.

“Eh!? Ah… You’re right…” I replied. I was so caught up in my fight with Yuu, that I totally forgot that the people that were having the best scores in the event would also become kidnapping targets…

“And because of that, I can legally save you, Saintess!” He exclaimed… Scary. Shivers ran all over my spine… This should just be a normal event kidnapping, but why am I getting goosebumps when listening to this guy, “Ah, to think that this lowly Hymn’s Guru would be able to touch lady Maria directly… What a blessing…”

Okay, that’s it. This guy is crazy, “Let go of me! <Sacred Flame>!”

“Oh! What an honour! To think that I could be directly touched by lady Maria’s sacred flame! My body will forever remember this wonderful sensation!” The pervert exclaimed.

“What!? Why!? Why didn’t it work!?” I couldn’t help shouting. I really did cast the spell for real! Does he have immunity to fire damage or something!?

“To be burnt by lady Maria’s love is truly a blessing.” He said… Why did I have to get kidnapped by a pervert…?

“Yuu! I’m sorry! Please help me! Please help me right now!” I shouted as loudly as I could… When I was in trouble, dealing with something that was too much for me, he always helped me out… Please help me out again.

I was already crying and hitting the back of the head of this pervert, but not only it seemed to be ineffective, but he also seemed to be happy about it… Why!?

“Do not worry, for I won’t harm you, my lady.” He told me.

“I-is that so…?” I asked.

Coming to think about it, this is just a kidnapping for the event, so… Even if this guy is perverted and scary, it should be alright for as long as the event's rules are followed. I'll probably just be taken to his home country and that will be the end of it… Right?

"Hymn's Pledge number eighteen! They hide out of timidity, so look over them and love them!" The pervert exclaimed.

"Yuu! Please help me!" I shouted once more.

I'm sure I was horribly pale now. I don't care if things go worse, or if the NPCs near me get hurt, I just need some help… I wouldn't even mind if Rena came and destroyed everything in our surroundings in the process, just please save me!

"Hymn's Pledge number…" The pervert continued talking… Please shut up and let me go already…

Chapter 178 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part fifteen

As I fought with the Supreme Commander, we ended up getting inside the castle and kept on attacking each other while inside its corridors. Each time he swung his Naginata, some cuts were left on the walls of the very palace he was trying to protect.

… Though my explosion caused so much damage to this castle, that I guess a few cuts from his weapon won't make a big difference.

I dodged another one of his blows, picked a piece of rubble that was falling from above, rotated my body around to gain enough momentum, then threw the rubble towards him.

However, he didn't even bother with dodging the projectile. He just charged straight-forward and crushed the piece of rubble with his head, then attacked me again with his Naginata.

… I guess rubble won't be enough to damage him when our difference in levels is this high.

Then let's try something else. When he tried his next attack, I jumped away while throwing some explosives towards him. He didn't dodge those either, but their explosion left… A small burn mark? It's not much, but he did take damage at least.

He seemed to be a bit surprised by the explosion, so he stopped his charges for a second and said, "Of course, you certainly do like your explosions."

“I don’t like them that much…?” I replied.

Though I did use explosives when I killed the king, kidnapped the princess, attacked the nobles, and on this assault on the city too… Well, they’re too useful to not be used.

“Didn’t your parents tell you to not play with fire? Did they fail to teach you even this much?” He asked me.

“… The bad girl is me. Don’t throw your criticism towards mom.” I replied.

Mom always told me what she deemed to be correct. She was always sincere and taught me in a way that I could understand, even if I didn’t necessarily agree with her at times.

I’m no longer a small child. I can make own decisions and whatever I do is not mom’s fault. To insult her at this point of my life is absurd.

“Huh? Did I touch a sore spot there?” The supreme commander asked, but I didn’t reply, “But you see, little girl…”

As he talked, I carefully positioned myself so that he couldn’t see what my left hand was doing… Which I used to prepare poison needles while my familiars used some temporary buffs to increase my strength.

“Aren’t a child’s errors fundamentally an issue caused by faulty upbringing by their parents?” The annoying old man asked me.

“Die.” I told him.

Then, I threw my shortsword up a small bit, threw smokebombs towards him, picked up my shortsword and rushed in his direction.

With his sight blocked by the smoke, I tried beheading him with my shortsword, but he parried my attack. I also tried throwing the poison needles, but he was able to dodge all of them… And then, he started laughing out loud.

“What’s so funny?” I asked him.

“I’m laughing at your naivety, in really thinking that your actions are not your parents’ responsibilities!” He exclaimed.

“They aren’t. Mom is not a bad parent.” I replied.

“And that’s why you’re naïve! Parents cannot escape responsibility for their children’s actions! Our children’s behavior is affected primarily by the influence of the adults near them… And the ones who have the most influence are the parents!

“Saying that ‘I told her not to do it, but she doesn’t listen’ is just an excuse! To fail as a parent that doesn’t know how to properly educate their child!” The annoying old man kept on saying those things as he parried each of my attacks that were aimed at his vitals.

I even took out a hidden knife from my inventory and tried to pierce his mouth with it, but he was able to stop it by biting the knife… Just how strong is his jaw?

“You understand, little girl? Adults have the duty to raise, guide, and care for their children… If they can’t do that, nor even take responsibility for their children’s actions, then they’re failures as parents.” The old man didn’t shut up… “You hear me? Your parents failed!”

He then kicked my chest and pushed me away from him with it. His stomps were strong enough to leave footprints on the stone floor, so getting hit by his kick hurt quite a bit… I can’t let him land direct blows on me like that.

I sighed, then said, “You’re mistaken.”

I took out an HP potion, drank it at once, crushed the empty bottle and put the glass shards into an iron ball that had explosives and poison inside it.

After that, I continued, “Mom did tell me when I was doing wrong things, she did reprimand me when I did bad deeds… However, I don’t think I’ve been doing anything wrong here.” As I was saying this, I prepared five similar grenades to this last one and stored them in my pockets. I also asked my familiars to use more buffs on me.

Then, I told him, “I don’t think it was a bad thing to explode a city, kill people or start a war.”

“… I don’t get what you’re saying.” The old man said.

“Killing the king, the crown prince, your loved ones, your co-workers, making the entire kingdom fall into Chaos… What is wrong with that?” I asked him while putting threads all around the walls and ceiling, to stop them from crumbling on top of us.

I also set up some thinner sharp threads that were coated with poison. Which should not only be hard to see, but also force him to limit his movement to avoid touching them, then I said, “In the end, isn’t all this the same? Just like how playing with fire is still a form of ‘playing’, everything I did is also just that. I was ‘playing’… There is no good nor evil there.”

“I see… In that case, you absolutely must die.” As he said that, he charged towards me again, but I was already prepared for it, so I threw one of the grenades with the <Meteor> skill while also asking Santa to put a barrier to stop him.

However, he broke through the barrier as if it was made of paper, so I had to avoid his attack by jumping into one of my threads.

“Your parents education failed thoroughly. I’ll have to wipe you out, and all records of their failure with it.” He told me.

“I don’t care about the words of an old man who lost his lord twice due to someone ‘playing’ around. No matter what you say, I’ll keep on ‘playing’ and you can go find a new lord to serve.” I replied.

“It is truly a pity that children can’t choose their parents, maybe you’d have been raised properly if you had the chance to choose better people to take care of you.” He said.

“Aren’t you the biggest failure here? The old man who couldn’t protect his lord twice?” I said.

“Please die.” Both of us said together, then charged towards one another.

Chapter 179 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part sixteen

(Feera Von Hermagne's PoV)

Translator's Note: As Feera hasn't appeared in quite some time, I'll give everyone some quick reminders in case anyone forgot who she is or her circumstances.

Feera is the first princess of Hermagne.

Annabella was the maid who cared for Feera since Feera was young. Rena killed Annabella.

Some time ago, Rena killed Hermagne's King and kidnapped Feera. Feera suffered a lot during that time because Rena forced Feera to see a lot of people she cared for die and stuff like that.

Hannes was eventually able to rescue Feera and bring her back to Hermagne. When this happened, Rena promised that she would no longer harm Feera.

Rena eventually killed the Crown Prince of Hermagne, making the 2nd prince the new person that was going to rise to the throne.

The 2nd prince was greedy for power and stuff like that, so he'd do whatever he'd need to in order to make sure nobody could challenge his claim to the throne.

———

“There they are!” I could hear a soldier shouting that from outside.

The sudden noise startled me, but I soon calmed down again once I heard the usual noises of the chains… I guess the castle might be under attack by a criminal? Probably by that woman…

I sighed, then looked at my chained hands for the umpteenth time… Being imprisoned under the accusation of murdering my oldest brother? Really?

… I suppose it couldn’t be helped. Almost everyone who supported my oldest brother, or that wished to help me, are dead after all. Who would contradict the words of my second brother when taking this into account?

“Don’t let them through!” Another guard exclaimed.

My brother even chained my ankles… Why? What would I even be able to do if I was allowed to walk around freely in this room? There is nothing here… It may be slightly more comfortable than a prison cell or the castle’s dungeons, but it’s still a room made for noble prisoners, there is no way father would have let anything in this place that would have allowed someone to escape.

… Will I just die here? I somehow survived when each person that I loved died… When Annabella bought time for my escape… When dad was killed… When I was kidnapped for the sake of starting the war with the Empire… Even when Marquis Gawain died, I somehow survived, but… I can’t really escape from here, can I?

Being chained like this, isolated from anyone who would care for me… I’m just powerless. Even if my second brother doesn’t send someone to assassinate me, I might just get buried alive by rubble. It’s actually quite likely when considering who is the person that is probably attacking the castle right now… Or maybe she’ll just destroy the whole thing, and blow me up on the process.

… I wish I could have at least talked to Annabella one more time. We couldn’t even find her body after all… And my oldest brother is now gone too…

“You shall not pass!” A guard exclaimed. His voice was close.

“Out of the way!” A voice I knew shouted… He was really close. I couldn’t quite recognize it, but… He was definitely close.

Why though? There is nothing in this area, just locked up nobles with nothing of value in them.

… Well, I suppose it doesn’t matter. I guess dying by human hands might be preferrable over being crushed by rubble at least.

But then, the door to my room was flung open, “Hurry up, we’re leaving!” The known voice shouted.

I turned towards him. I couldn’t quite believe it, but it was definitely… “Lord Hannes!?” I exclaimed.

“Eh? Y-you’re chained!? Hold on just a second!” Lord Hannes rushed my way, and used his axe to quickly cut through the chains, setting me free.

“Why are you…?” I couldn’t help asking. It still felt hard to believe that he came here to save me… Am I really… Am I really going to survive? Once again? Somehow…?

“Ah, well… You see…” Lord Hannes seemed to be having a hard time answering. He was scratching the back of his head, and seemed to be searching for the right words.

… He sighed. He sighed, then gently patted my head, “I’m sorry. I couldn’t protect your oldest brother.” I lost my breath at those words. The tears that I thought had long dried up, started welling up on my eyes again, “But I promise you… I’ll protect you. I’ll protect you, and give a huge scolding to that villainous woman.”

I didn’t hold back the tears. I understood that lord Hannes did what he could, I understood that he came here for me, I understood that he couldn’t have expected my oldest brother to be killed in the way he was, but…

But still… “Is it really… Is it really okay for me to live…?” I asked. Was it really okay for me to keep on living, when each person that I loved had died one after the other? Do I really deserve to be saved, when not even my oldest brother was?

Lord Hannes was startled by my words, both his eyes and mouth were wide open… How horrible of me. He just saved me, and I’m asking if I have the right to be alive… I’m so pathetic, “I-I’m sorry-”

“That’s not something a child should be worrying about!” He cut off my apology, then suddenly lifted me up, putting me on his back, “Is there anything you want to bring with you!?” He asked.

Something to bring…? I… I couldn’t quite follow what was happening anymore, but if there was one thing… “Annabella’s memento.”

“Here, I already got it.” He then pulled out a small wooden box and gave it to me… Was this in one of my brother’s rooms? Did he search for it before coming to me…?

“Thank you…” I muttered. The tears were falling even faster than before… It’s okay, I don’t need to hold them back.

“Ah, just… Don’t open it in front of me, alright?” He suddenly told me.

“Eh? Uhn… Okay.” I didn’t quite understand it, but I nodded for now.

Still, this box… I wonder what’s inside it? It feels… Warm.

Lord Hannes started running while carrying me. He seemed to be leaving the castle, so I guess we won’t be staying in Hermagne for now… I suppose it can’t be helped. I don’t want to leave, but if I want to survive, then I have to run from my second brother. At least… At least for now.

I took a deep breath, then decided to ask, “Where are we going?”

“The Wallace Kingdom.” He instantly replied.

“W-Wallace!?” I couldn’t believe my ears… Why is lord Hannes… Why to that woman’s kingdom…?

“Don’t worry. I’ve known that woman for a long time now, and I can assure you that she has never broken a promise. I know that you have all the reason to be wary of her, but… She won’t harm you.” Lord Hannes explained.

“I… see…” Was all I could say for a reply.

He is right that I have no trust in that woman, but… If Lord Hannes is saying it, then I suppose I should trust his words.

Though I wonder what could have caused Lord Hannes to not only know that woman for a long time, but to also know that she has never broken a promise… Those two people who have directly opposite morals, somehow are close enough to have exchanged multiple promises…? That is… Unsettling.

“Hold on tight!” As Lord Hannes said that, he started running faster than before.

“Y-yes!” I hurriedly exclaimed while clinging to him with as much strength as I could muster.

… I don’t understand what’s happening. I don’t understand their relationship, I don’t understand anything, but… It’s fine. It’s not the time to worry about those things.

I looked back for a small while, looking through the corridors that we were quickly passing through. This kingdom… My father’s kingdom… My oldest brother kingdom… I’ll return to it. One day, I’ll definitely return to it.

… Even if I have to sell my very soul to that devil.

Chapter 180 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part seventeen

“Kageyama, stretch.” I gave this order while I dodged a downwards swing from the Naginata. Kageyama made my shortsword become an odachi just like he had done a few times before.

I then rushed towards the old man and swung the odachi with varying length towards his neck, but… “Not very tasty.” He commented as he bit on the odachi… Did he seriously stop it with his teeth? It’s interesting to see the things that Important NPCs that weren’t meant to be beaten by players can do.

But… It’s not like I’m alone here, you know? I have my familiars buffing me.

I put more strength into my arm, which allowed me to continue moving my Odachi onwards, throwing the old man to the wall. He seemed to be surprised by how much raw power I had, but it’s just the game stats in the end, my strength won’t be reflected on my appearance.

But then, as I was about to start rushing towards the old man again, he started laughing, “Did one of your parents have a child with a gorilla!?”

“So there are gorillas in this world too…” I answered.

“Oh, right, you’re a migrant… Then, can migrant children be born from gorillas?” He asked.

“I don’t think so…” I said.

Can you please focus? I don’t want you to have the excuse of being too distracted during the battle when you lose… Yeah, let’s pull him back to it. Killing him while he laughs off like that isn’t as entertaining.

I first threw some explosive towards him, forcing him to move. Then, I threw some poison needles directly towards the place he started running towards.

He repelled them again and rushed towards me though. I tried attacking his side with my shortsword, but he parried my slash with his naginata… How bothersome, the difference in stats is too high. The only stat I am probably winning at is AGI, but the difference isn’t large enough to the point that he can’t react to my attacks.

I could try stacking up my good buff like the ‘slaughterer’s organs’, but he’d probably start buffing himself too if I did it. This would probably just make the stat gap between us even larger…

“So, what will you do? There is a clear gap in our power. Will you just give up and die?” The old man asked me.

“Of course not. It is in human nature to kill those that are stronger than them.” I answered.

… Though for this one, I’ll probably need to be trickier and smarter than usual.

******

(Adolf M. Southcloud’s PoV)

As the girl said that it is in human nature to kill those who are stronger than them, her eyes flared up with murderous intent… What can she even do

though? Strengthening? It could lower the gap in our powers, but only for as long as I didn't strengthen myself too.

… I would prefer to avoid using strengthening though, as my body can't handle it that well, and there is plenty of cleanup work needed after this girl dies, but I can do it if needed.

"Well, are you coming or not!?" I exclaimed while laughing out loud once more. Though that just seemed to make her murderous intent more intense… How can this aura come from such a young girl?

She rushed towards me, I carefully dodged the sword that constantly changed sizes, ducked below some poisonous needles and thrusted my Naginata towards her, but she sidestepped it and said, "<Blood World>"

I did not stop my attack, I used the momentum of my movement to turn the naginata towards her, who kept on dancing around, dodging the blows and throwing poison needles that I kept on evading.

But then, something exploded below my feet, and some shards tore the surface of my skin. There was also a large-scale thread attack coming my way, but… Those were decoys!

The girl didn't stop her attacks at all, she kept on switching between shortsword and odachi, attacking me from different angles, but I blocked each and every one of her blows!

I then tried kicking her head with my <Demolishing Black Dragon Roundhouse Kick>, but she dodged it with a somersault and used <Shadow Double>.

… So she can use this kind of thing too? This girl isn't afraid of jumping into the fight against a stronger enemy, but she also enjoys it and keeps trying new tricks… What kind of demon is she?

It's been years since I last killed this kind of enemy, but… No matter, I will do it. Not even a girl who laughs when faced with a life-or-death battle will be able to defeat me!

Chapter 181 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part eighteen

“<Shadow Spear – Type One>” I threw the shadow spear towards the old man, ran towards him, then pulled a thread to limit his movement.

He tried to deflect the spear with his Naginata, but instead of flying away, the Shadow Spear exploded into a black smoke cloud and multiple smaller spears.

At the same time, I also threw an explosive towards him to further increase the smoke and activated the <Stealth> skill while he was distracted, in order to get out of his line of sight.

Then, I used, “<Shadow Spear – Type Two>” making a large number of spearheads grow from the ground, piercing the enemy’s feet, locking him in place. He immediately broke through both the Type One and Type Two spears, but that doesn’t matter.

“<Fatal Blow>” for my goal was to get behind him and use the same kind of skill that I used to kill the tutorial NPC at the start of the game.

“<Everchanging Stream>!” The old man shouted.

“<Shadow Spear – Type Three>” In order to stop his ‘Everchanging Stream’ from diverting my ‘Fatal Blow’, I used the ‘Type Three’ to make spears fall in a semicircle from the sky. Due to that, his deflecting skill was

naturally diverted towards the path of the spears by the system, as they were arriving first, letting my shortsword move freely towards his neck.

“<Offering To The Gorgon>” However, just before my ‘Fatal Blow’ reached him, the old man used some weird skill that petrified a portion of his body. The shortsword couldn’t pierce through his hardened neck, so he survived… What a strange defensive skill.

I jumped away from him for a second and used the, “<Ghostly Sword of the War Demon>” long range skill to force him to move out of position, but… He took it? Is it harder for him to dodge with his semi-petrified body?

In that case, I used <Acid Rain> to see how much damage it would deal on him.

“Smart, but not enough! <Dragon Claw’s River>!” He used that to stop the ‘Acid Rain’… I guess acid must indeed be dangerous for petrified opponents, then? In that case, please don’t mind it if I start throwing explosives with acid inside them.

Before that though, I had to sidestep to dodge a blow from his Naginata, but then I threw a smoke bomb towards him.

“<Dragon Fang->” He started using a skill, but the smoke bomb made it harder for him to find me. Moreover, I also threw acidic explosives towards him, and used <Stealth> once more, “Stop crawling around like the worm you are!” He exclaimed attacking me with the naginata. I blocked the attack, but was pushed away by it.

The old man used this opportunity to drink a potion, which instantly cured him from the petrification… Did he steal that from me? That’s kinda bothersome.

He laughed when looking at me, “It’s only natural to remove the means of recovery of the enemy!” He exclaimed.

“<Stealth>” I used it once again while throwing explosives and quickly moving towards him with my threads. I tried using this opportunity to take

a potion from his pocket, but he stopped it with his high AGI, now that he was no longer petrified.

However, because he was busy dealing with me, he couldn't stop the explosive from releasing smoke right on his face, blocking his field of vision once more.

"I feel like I'm playing with my grandchildren right now!" He exclaimed.

"Is that so?" I asked.

"There!" As he exclaimed that, he kicked me away… How strange. I used misdirection skills that should have made my voice come from a different location, but he found me as soon as I said something.

Well, it isn't a big deal though, since Santa made a shield that stopped me from taking too much damage.

"So, what kind of smoke will come next? Are there any other colors in your stock?" He asked.

"<Flash>" I used Santa's Light Magic to send a bright light towards the old man's eyes.

"Seems like you have more fun in store!" Was his reply.

Once more, I used <Stealth>, but this time I jumped on top of my threads, going up to the sky, "<Echo>"

"How troublesome…" He commented.

I was using 'Echo' to make sounds reverberate through the threads, which should make it harder to notice my footsteps. I also used <Silent Move> to properly avoid his detection.

"I wonder where you are right now… Seems like things are getting exciting!" The old man said.

Well, it is a bit fun, I guess. I can notice that I'm grinning a bit, after all.

Nonetheless, I put my dagger on my mouth, some explosives on one hand, and the poisonous needles on another… Let's see how much more he can endure!

Chapter 182 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part nineteen

“<Shadow Double – True Form>” I created five clones of myself with this. The first handled the threads, the second scattered poisons, the third blinded the old man, the fourth assisted with long-distance magic, and the fifth comes with me as a decoy.

It was a bit of a shame that I couldn’t directly control them and could only give simple instructions instead, but I suppose it can’t be helped. I don’t think the human brain has enough processing power to control six bodies at once.

Besides, they were already being quite useful. With this much going on, I was already able to land a blow on the old man’s leg with my shortsword, even if he killed the fifth clone in the process.

He then attacked me with his Naginata, but I was able to block it with my shortsword. And he didn’t have time to continue his attacks, as knives, poisonous explosives and magic bombardment were raining down from above, so I could safely step back and use <Stealth> once more, since his last attack had dissipated the skill.

“<Black Dragon’s Ascension>!” As the old man used this skill, he shoved his naginata on the ground, then moved it up, throwing a bunch of rocks upwards. Those got rid of the second and fourth clones. However, the first

clone quickly reacted to that and used its threads to block the rest of the debris, stopping any further harm.

“<Blazing Grove>!” He then used this and spread a large amount of flames through the threads. However, the threads had liquid poison applied to them, so it started vaporizing when entering into contact with the fire. The result was a very toxic and hot gas that burnt the old man’s face, taking away his sight and smell.

“<Fatal Blow>” I aimed at his neck to finish him off.

“Even if I can’t see nor hear anything, I still know what you’re aiming for!” The old man somehow dodged my attack and tried countering it with a stab of his Naginata aimed at my belly.

It wasn’t too hard to dodge it though. Also, in his debilitated condition, I was able to quickly steal his potions, making sure that he wouldn’t be able to recover from the wounds.

“<Quintuple Dragon Fang>!” The old man swung his Naginata down with this skill next.

“<Ex Enchantment: Accelerate>” But I used the buff to avoid his attack, then threw an explosive to the hole created by his flaming naginata.

By now the first and third clones were also beaten, but that’s fine, as the preparations were mostly done by now.

“<Divine Oath: This is my playground and you’re a toy.>” As I started the oath, I threw knives with poisonous smoke bombs tied behind them, while also spread out as much thread as possible to limit the old man’s movement, “<Divine Oath: Build and Destroy; Play and Abandon>”

The old man who had lost most of his senses still somehow reacted to my attacks and tried coming my way, but the threads were harming him quite a bit, and he was bleeding quite a bit already.

“Hey, little girl!” He exclaimed that, but it was time to end this.

“<Enforce the Rules>” I used the support skill that Yuu taught me, the skill that pushes your buffs towards an opponent… With this, it was over.

The old man fell down, unable to deal with the health loss caused by the oath.

Not losing the opportunity, I threw a large number of explosives towards him, making quite the explosion.

And yet… “I’m surprised, you still breathe?” I commented.

“I won’t die by this little, girlie…” He tried to stand up, but his broken legs did not help him on that.

“It’s definitely the end of your life, though?” I replied.

“Don’t mock me!” He exclaimed and tried to get himself up by putting his weight on the naginata, but he just coughed blood when making that attempt.

“You have poison, acid, bleeding and an oath on you… It’s a bit too much, isn’t it?” I told him.

After a small pause, he said, “I guess you just can’t beat youth in the end…” Then he sat down and started laughing. It’s impressive, even though my detection skills are clearly showing his HP as 0, he did not die immediately, “You youngsters have some really outlandish ideas and movements. Quite scary to see how far you can all go.”

“Is that so…?” Should I listen to his words to the end? I did hear Alexei to some extent after all.

With this in mind, I took a step forward… But at that moment, “However, you should not underestimate old men!” the old man’s flaming naginata pierced my belly from behind… Huh? That was unexpected. I suppose I wasn’t the only one making plans on how to end the battle.

“Seems like I learned something interesting today… Then, please die quickly.” As I said that, I threw a knife towards the old man’s forehead,

piercing it.

Then, I drank a potion and used Santa's recovery magic to take care of the wound. It wasn't a big deal, since it had pierced no vital spots.

"Then, let me help you learn something else." The old man said.

"Are you immortal…?" I asked. This is too weird, his HP is definitely at 0, and there is a knife piercing his forehead, why isn't he dead yet?

"My actual body is far from the capital by now, and his majesty is with me." The old man explains.

"Oh, I see." That makes more sense now. I've basically been dealing with something similar to my Shadow Double… To think his clone was this strong. There was quite the difference in our stats, wasn't there?

"I've learned how to fight you. I'll be prepared next time." The old man said.

"That sounds fun." I replied.

Though now that I think about it, in the entire fight the old man only used simple moves that relied almost entirely on his outrageous amount of stats… In that case, I ended up getting basically no useful information on his fighting style now, did I?

Quite crafty of him to do that… He learned what I do without giving out his own trump cards…

"Well, I'll kill you for good next time." I told him.

"That's my line." He replied.

"Let's meet again. It was quite fun, wasn't it?" I asked.

"Sure, though I will be there with my actual body when it happens." As he said that, the clone body started to fade away.

I waved my hand to that Adolf who was laughing while having a calm smile, the one he'd probably use to look at his grandchildren.

Well… I didn't capture the prince, and Adolf didn't die, but… I suppose that's fine. Eren's subordinates must have surely captured quite a few people by now, so this will still be a worthwhile trip in the end.

Chapter 183 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part twenty

I guess I should join up with Hannes now? I think we have done enough on Hermagne already, so no point in staying here any longer… Besides, we gotta keep going if we want to win this event, don't we?

It would be nice to go after the Empire next, but the Wallace Kingdom doesn't have enough manpower to fight two major powers in a row, so I suppose we should focus on smaller countries until the event ends. Which should happen soon, since it was supposed to end after half the countries were gone.

… Well, we didn't destroy Hermagne though, but I guess that's fine, I've already gotten my enjoyment in this place, so let's get going.

******

(Maria's PoV)

"What is this madness!?" I asked as I was tied up to a fancy pedestal. But the crazy pervert, Hymn's Guru, started chanting some weird things instead of answering me.

Seriously, stop that! This is way too creepy! Please hurry up and help me, Yuu! I'm sorry! I'll apologize to you properly when you get here!

I turned towards the girl that was accompanying the Guru, "Hey, can't you make him stop?"

“Well… He didn’t finish his prayers yet…” She answered without looking me in the eye.

… Don’t just avoid my glare like that! You have common sense, don’t you!? This situation is absurd, so do something about it!

“It’s just… Well, he got fond of you because you didn’t grow up that much…” This Ranka girl said that.

Really…? This…? I’m at this situation because I didn’t spend much time customizing my character…? “Oh, come on! You can’t seriously be claiming that my character’s appearance is at fault! Take me out of here already!” I exclaimed.

“Sorry…” Still averting her gaze, Ranka said that.

… And here I thought that dealing with my size was troublesome enough outside the game, but now it’s also causing me problems in KSO!? I even skipped late-night gaming with Yuu at times in order to try keeping a healthy routine so that I could grow up better! And now you’re gonna tell me that, not only were my efforts in vain, but my lack of effort in character customization is going to be harmful to me!? This is ridiculous! Absolutely ridiculous!

I really wanted to burn that pervert down now… Why is it that my spells didn’t seem to do damage to him…? Come on, Yuu, hurry up and get here already…

The Ranka girl, unable to withstand my gaze, started reciting Buddhist Sutras… “Don’t run from reality like that! You are together with him, so you ought to do something about this! This is far too much for simple event kidnapping!” I shouted at her.

“Uhn… Well… Don’t be so loud? Your believers will be scared if you shout at them like that?” Ranka said.

“Just who has believers and why should I care if they get scared!?” I yelled.

“I mean… He is praying for you…” Ranka pointed towards Hymn’s Guru.

Yuu… Please come here and kill those two people… I really will apologize to you properly…

Chapter 184 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part twenty-one

(Yuu's PoV)

What's that…? After using some observation skills to look at Maria's situation in order to save her, I saw her being worshipped by some crazy pervert that seemed to hate the big mountains? That's the kind of thing I need to rescue Maria from!?

And the other girl nearby is just chanting Buddhist sutras instead of helping? Why? She should at least pity Maria's situation at the minimum… I really don't want to get involved with those people. Could she handle it on her own somehow? I mean, she is the 'Saintess', right? She'll manage this madness in one way or another.

… I got a message. It's from Maria, 'Please save me, Yuu. I'm going crazy here, I know that we weren't in the best of terms, but please help me…'

I guess it can't be helped. If Maria reached the point where she's just pleading honestly instead of showing a more tsun side, then things are definitely desperate over there.

'Just you wait, I'll be there soon.' I answered her.

It's a good thing that the event only blocks messaging between members of different countries. It would be troublesome if we couldn't communicate

properly in this kind of situation.

Well, then. Let's do this. Even if I'll have to deal with those absolutely mad people… I don't know how much sanity I'll lose from handling them, but it will be alright.

And so, I started my preparations for the rescue operation.

******

(Maria's PoV)

"Why, oh, Saintess…?" The Guru was saying his usual nonsense.

"I'm not your saintess!?" As I replied to him, I got a message from Yuu. It surprised me a bit, so my reply ended on a weird, tone, but that was fine, because the contents of the reply were the best I could have hoped for.

I started giggling a bit from reading it. What's up with him suddenly deciding to help after taking this long…? But I guess that's just like him after all. I'm glad I can count on him.

"Saintess?" The Guru was confused, but I didn't stop giggling, "Hey, something strange is happening to the Saintess, can't you do something about it with the power of Buddha?" He then asked an absurd question to Ranka.

"What do you think Buddha is!?" Ranka was understandably astonished at his comment.

"What a relief… I was really stupid to have been so angry at him for that much, wasn't I?" I said to nobody in particular.

"Saintess?" The Guru seemed even more confused.

"I'm no Saintess, but whatever, say what you will. It's only for a short while anyways." I replied.

"Because the event is ending soon?" The Guru asked.

“Because Yuu will come help soon.” I answered.

“Damn that parasite!” The Guru exclaimed.

“Eh?” Both me and Ranka said in unison.

I thought this pervert was just a crazy worshipper who kept saying nonsense, but he is now swearing too? What brought this up?

“When that devil comes to kidnap you, I’ll show him…” The Guru said another absurd statement.

“Aren’t you the one doing the kidnapping…?” I told him, “Do you happen to have a grudge against Yuu or something?” I then asked.

“But of course! He’s often seen with not only the Genocider, but also with Maria! Damn that parasite!” He exclaimed.

Both me and Ranka stayed silent at this statement… I guess he isn’t just a mad pervert, but a mad genorer pervert who has a crazy religion revolving around me?

“I’m so gonna crush that guy…” He started muttering.

… I wonder how Yuu being mine and Rena’s friend seriously made someone get jealous enough, to the point of turning from ‘faithful worshipper’ to ‘jealous murderous yandere’… This Guru guy is crazy. Why is Ranka by his side?

His words were getting kinda annoying either way, so, while I waited for Yuu, I decided to burn this Guru guy’s hair. It didn’t do much, but it helped me maintain my sanity.

Chapter 185 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part twenty-two

“Oh, Hannes, there you are.” I said as I drove the motorcycle Jun towards him.

“Hey…” Hannes replied. He was about to leave the capital, so it seems my timing was good.

Though I wonder if he got his business here done? He was the one to suggest coming to Hermagne, so he must have had a reason for that.

But let’s put that aside for now. Mom always said that greetings were important, so I should start with that, “And oh my, if it isn’t the princess, it’s been a while, hasn’t it?” I said.

However, the princess didn’t reply, “Are you alright?” I asked her.

“Stop it, Rena.” Hannes intervened. His tone was quite forceful.

“Is there a problem?” I asked him. I was just wondering about her health, since she wasn’t talking…

“Did you forget what you did to her?” He asked me back.

“You mean like… Killing the king or her maid?” I replied. I don’t get his point much, people doing things to others is a very common occurrence, “Or do you mean the time we invaded the Empire? That one was fun.”

“If you remember that much, then don’t talk to her as if you two had a normal relationship…” Hannes heaved a sigh as he said that.

“It’s not ‘normal’, I guess? But what might be the problem?” I asked him.

He didn’t reply. I must have made a mistake in doing ‘normal’ behavior then? But I don’t get why Hannes seems angry and why the princess refuses to reply to my comments…

“Usually, one won’t want to talk to someone that did horrible things to them.” Hannes explained.

“I see… So the problem wasn’t that the words I used to communicate weren’t ‘normal’, but that the act of talking in itself, when considering my relationship with the princess, wasn’t ‘normal’…” I mused. That’s quite hard to understand.

“Wait, you seriously thought that this wasn’t a problem!?” Hannes exclaimed.

“Yes…?” I replied, “I thought it was important to greet an acquaintance that I haven’t met in a while, so I did it.”

“You really thought that you could easily greet the daughter of someone you killed? Just what goes on in your head…?” Hannes sighed once again as he said that.

It couldn’t be helped though. Mom never taught me about how I had to make exceptions for my greetings when meeting people whose relatives I had killed, so there was no way I could behave ‘normally’ in this kind of situation.

“But it happened quite some time ago, didn’t it?” I replied.

“Just… How would you react if a criminal that killed someone important to you decided to casually talk to you less than a year after the occurrence?” Hannes asked.

“I don’t get it? Someone precious to me wasn’t killed, and nobody tried talking to me.” I answered.

“I’m telling you to try putting yourself in the princess’ position!” Hannes exclaimed.

“But I’m not a princess?” I told him.

“Ah…” He sighed again, “I guess this is just like you…”

He seemed to be tired of this conversation… I guess I failed to establish proper communication this time?

But well… “Hey, Hannes… Does this count as you properly scolding me like you said you would?” I asked him.

“Oh, shut up!” He exclaimed, though I just giggled at that.

“Lord Hannes…?” The princess called him out.

“Ah, let’s leave it at that and hurry back to the Wallace Kingdom!” Hannes hurriedly replied. He seemed to be flustered for some reason.

“Sure, let’s get going.” I said, then made Jun transform the Motorcycle in a way that would let Hannes and the princess sit on a sidecar. The rest of the people I brought here can return on their own.

“Hey… Rena.” The princess said once we started moving.

Though I wonder where Tapiocaman went. I saw that Hymn’s Guru and Ranka separated from the group, but Tapiocaman should have been together with Hannes, right?

“Rena…?” The princess said again.

I also wonder about Lily. She stayed behind at the Wallace Kingdom, but I don’t quite know why… Why would she stay there in the middle of the event? That person is somewhat mysterious.

“Rena!” The princess exclaimed.

“Hey, you shouldn’t ignore her…” Hannes said.

“I shouldn’t? But I thought I was not allowed to speak with the princess due to our relationship?” I asked him.

“You’re way too radical…” He sighed once again, “Look, it’s troublesome when the perpetrator starts a conversation with the victim, but when the victim is the one who starts the conversation, it’s usually seen as a way to compromise, so you should hear her out properly.” Hannes explained.

“Oh, I see.” I said. ‘Ordinary’ human relationships are truly complicated, but at least Hannes helps me out by explaining them properly.

“To think that it was this kind of person that messed up my country so badly…” The princess murmured something, but I couldn’t quite understand it. Her tone seemed to be a bit depressed though.

I wonder how I’ll ‘play’ with her though. I promised to not kill her, so maybe we should try ‘playing’ as friends?

… I’ll try thinking about it on the way to the Wallace Kingdom.

Chapter 186 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part twenty-three

(Maria's PoV)

Shortly after putting Hymn's Guru hair on fire, Yuu appeared and shouted, "Maria!"

I couldn't be happier to see him right now, "Yuu!" I exclaimed. To think I'll finally be free from this hell! Thank you for coming to save me, Yuu!

… No, never mind, can you go away, actually? I mean… "Why did you bring this pervert, of all people, here!?" I exclaimed.

"I'm not just a pervert, I'm the Perverted Gentleman!" That hellspawn behind Yuu replied. Just why? Why!? Did Yuu think that only a pervert would be able to defeat a pervert or something!? That's not how those things work! Take him away!

Ranka started screaming when seeing the Perverted Gentleman… See!? Her shock was so great that she even stopped reciting her Buddhist prayers that allowed her to escape reality!

"Did you come here to robe me of our Saintess!?" Hymn's Guru asked Yuu.

"She's not your Saintess…" Yuu replied.

Meanwhile, some NPCs started screaming as they saw the Perverted Gentleman. Some guards seemed to be pretty troubled about what to do as well… Why did you have to bring that hellspawn here, Yuu!?

“The Saintess presence has granted me salvation.” Hymn’s Guru said some nonsense.

“Maria isn’t the kind of person to save anyone.” Yuu replied with a really rude comment.

And the Perveted Gentleman was just showing off his body to any onlookers.

Both me and Ranka were in disbelief at this crazy development… “Is this some sort of punishment game that Yuu decided upon…?” I mused.

“Of course not, this is his selfish love for you burning brightly!” As the Perverted Gentleman said that, his body started shining, highlighting his barely covered private parts… Disgusting, “This boy who doesn’t know what to do with his emotions is desperately trying to gain the attention of his most loved girl!”

“I don’t think that would ever work?” Ranka commented.

“I just wanted to make up with him…” I said.

“I like everything about her, so please give up.” Hymn’s Guru told Yuu.

“Sorry, but I can’t.” Yuu replied.

“You see!?” The Perverted Gentleman blew a kiss to nobody in particular as he said that.

… And now a child started crying, a carriage overturned, the veins of an old woman started popping… And an old man that seemed to have fainted woke up from the pure pain caused by the existence of the Perverted Gentleman… This hellspawn is truly a terrifying creature.

“Then I have no choice. I, Hymn’s Guru, the head priest of Saintess Maria’s faith, will defeat the devil, Yuu!” Hymn’s Guru exclaimed while raising his fists.

“As Maria’s childhood friend, I’ll help her.” Yuu simply replied while raising his wand.

At the same time, the Perverted Gentleman raised his arms, he seemed ready to start fighting too… Scary.

“Hey, Ranka, that pervert might come for me, can you please stop him?” I asked her while casting some buffs on her.

“I won’t let you touch a single finger of Maria!” Ranka exclaimed while readying her naginata.

Then, Hymn’s Guru rushed towards Yuu while chanting his weird tenets or whatever.

Yuu also started casting a spell to counter his attack.

And then, the hellspawn came closer, “Holy Flames” I hurriedly casted.

“Samsara!” Ranka also used a skill.

“Adults will take the passion of children head on! Come at me with all you got!

“Though don’t worry, I won’t do anything to minors.” The Perverted Gentleman said.

“Shut up you pervert!” Both me and Ranka said in unison.

“Such tough love!” The pervert exclaimed.

And like this, the battle started.

Chapter 187 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part twenty-four

(Ranka's PoV)

The pervert tried punching my belly, but I blocked his attack with my naginata. He had also used some water-based skill to empower his fist, but Maria's flames nullified that.

Nonetheless, the impact of those punches was nothing to scoff at. Even when blocked, I still lost some HP and was pushed back a bit… There's no way I could handle this guy without support.

"What gentleman ends up hitting girls!?" I exclaimed.

"I think it's more important to judge people as individuals instead of by gender. Do you disagree?" He asked me as he unleashed his barrage of punches.

"… I don't… You stupid pervert! You and your worldly desires should just disappear!" I shouted.

"I'm not just a pervert! I'm the perverted gentleman!" He exclaimed.

"At most you're 20% gentleman! The other 80% are pure pervertedness!" I shouted back.

“… I’m surprised you can see a 20% of gentlemaness on this guy.” Maria commented.

“<Body Sublimation: Unlimited Growth>!” The pervert exclaimed.

“<Body Reformulation: Reject the Forbidden>!” I buffed myself too as I swung my naginata at the pervert, forcing him to step back.

“<Body Sublimation: Unlimited Deepness>!” The pervert buffed himself once more.

“<Spiritual Sublimation: Armaments of the Ethics>!” I buffed myself too.

The pervert then tried to draw closer to me, but I used the extra range of the naginata to keep him away, while Maria’s flames blocked his ranged attacks.

“<Buddha’s Possession: Wind Heaven>!” I used one more buff.

“<Divine Possession: Storming Water Dragon>!” The pervert used yet another buff.

He then punched my naginata’s blade to forcefully get it out of the way, but I used the impact to increase my own momentum and did a circular attack at him.

He was forced to jump back again to dodge that, but then he said, “If you don’t hurry up and defeat me, more and more of my allies will come. This country has gathered grudges from all sorts of people!”

“Yeah? But the Genocider will come soon if you don’t hurry.” I replied.

“I don’t particularly mind having an opportunity for a rematch against her!” The pervert exclaimed.

… I have to wonder how can he seriously say this kind of thing. With the Genocider and some more reinforcements from his side coming… This battlefield will go completely out of control. How can he look forward to that?

“However, this time my purpose is to help the knight rescue the princess, so let’s leave the rematch for another time!” The pervert exclaimed.

“… I’m not letting a pervert like you fulfill your worldly desires with Maria.” I replied.

“I’m not just a pervert! I’m the perverted gentleman!” He exclaimed.

At that moment, he glanced at the fight between Yuu and Hymn’s Guru, so I used the opportunity to attack him with the Naginata.

However, he quickly reacted to it and held my blade between the fingers of his hands. It obviously made a cut, but it didn’t pierce his hand completely… And he didn’t even flinch at that.

“What will be left of me if you remove the gentleman element!?” He exclaimed as he punched me away… Though I was able to keep hold of my naginata at least.

“Of course, nothing but a pervert!” I exclaimed.

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(Maria’s PoV)

I feel sorry for Ranka… She is losing about 30% of her HP each time the pervert lands a direct hit on her. She’d have already fallen if it wasn’t for the healing magic.

And well… The fact that she has to deal with that annoying pervert of all possible people doesn’t make it any better.

“I wish someone sane could come here soon…” I muttered to myself.

“Just what are you doing to the people that are trying to help you?” I heard a voice that I didn’t expect to hear here.

“Blossom…?” I turned around and saw that she was behind me, “You came to help me?”

“Reluctantly…” She replied.

“… Did you get paired up with the perverted gentleman perchance?” I asked.

She didn’t reply… Poor girl, that was pitiable.

“Well, if you came to help, then can you untie those ropes, please?” I asked her.

“Huh? Don’t wanna.” She replied.

… Eh? She refused? But she came to help? Did I misshear her somehow?

Let’s ask again… “Uhn… Blossom… Since you came here to help me, could you please untie those ropes?”

“Huh? Don’t wanna.” She replied on the exact same way as last time… “I mean, this is a good opportunity, isn’t it?” She gave me a very evil smile as she said that.

“Why are you smiling like that!? It’s scary!” I exclaimed.

“Well, maybe I can help you out if you beg for forgiveness for all the trouble that you caused last time?” She snickered.

“Huh? Forgiveness!? You were the one that cried at my lap!” I replied.

“I didn’t cry.” She lied.

“You absolutely did.” I told her.

“I did not.” She stubbornly said that, but she was looking away from me right now, and her face was beet red… I mean, come on! She was on my lap and Yuu was watching everything! How can she give such a bold lie!? “Just shut up, you damn shortie!”

“Oh? Showing your true natures now?” I replied.

“My true nature!? You’re the one who has such an absurd high ego that shouldn’t even be able to fit into this tiny body!” She exclaimed.

Oh, that’s it! I won’t forgive you even if you cry and apologize! And I won’t give you a lap pillow again!

I made use of the fact that she was too close to me, and headbutted her!

“Ah! You little…!” Blossom exclaimed.

“I still have room for growth!” I shouted.

“Even I’m taller than you, stupid!” She shouted back.

“You what!? You may be a bit big, but you’re still just a child inside!” I exclaimed.

“Just who is the child!?” She yelled.

“The one that cried on my lap, of course!” I told her.

“Oh, so the ‘saintess’ is a mature person now, is she?” Blossom asked.

“I’m not the one that decided on this stupid title!” I shouted.

“Oh, right, sorry. It was the Hymn’s idol then? My apologies.” Blossom snickered.

“Ah, right, that’s totally my fault… Just like how the second place of Chaos is now doing the goody-two-shoes act of helping her friends out, right?” I asked her.

“Huh!? That’s the kind of thing that the ‘adult I should rely on’ would say!? Isn’t this the argument of a petty child!?” She asked back.

“Oh no, did I hurt you? I’m sorry, should I give you a lap pillow again?” I asked.

“Shortie!” She exclaimed.

“Brat!” I replied.

“Idiot!” She said.

“Stupid!” I told her.

“Small-breasted loli!” She exclaimed.

“Chuuni!” I shouted.

“Why the hell…?” She started saying.

“Do I have to deal with this kind of thing!?” As I exclaimed that, we both headbutted one another.

Chapter 188 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part twenty-five

(Blossom's PoV)

"Look, I don't wanna play with you either, but that moss head friend of yours asked me to help you." I told Maria while pointing towards Yuu, who was intercepting the attacks of Hymn's Guru with some really weird skills, "So like how did you even get caught anyways? You're supposed to be one of the top players."

"My flames didn't work…" She meekly replied.

"They didn't…?" I asked, "Maybe Hymn's Guru prepared his equipment specifically for fighting you? I suppose he wouldn't take much damage if he tailored his entire gear into obtaining fire resistance…"

She should still have some tools to deal with this kind of thing though? Like adding holy attribute to her flames or something?

Well, she was being attacked by a pervert, so I guess it must have been hard to think properly at that situation… But to think I was comforted by a girl that lost to that pervert…

Never mind that, let's focus on the situation at hand, "Well, what are you going to do now?" I asked her.

“What I’m going to do?” She asked me, putting a particularly strong emphasis on the ‘I’.

“I mean, your beloved moss head knight is struggling right now, isn’t he?” I told her while pointing towards the battle, “Your knight’s setup is more focused on testing things and on supporting, so he is in a disadvantage on a one-on-one battle.”

“So what…?” She asked.

“Well, you might want to help him, but the opponent has already beaten you once, and has gear specifically prepared against you. Would you be of any use in this situation?” I told her.

Maria then muttered something, but it was a bit too quiet, so I couldn’t really understand it.

“What did you just say?” I asked.

“Don’t mess with me! Yuu is more than just someone who likes bug-testing, and I have been a gamer for years! Beating a pervert like that is nothing, so hurry up and untie me already!” She shouted.

“Loud…” I complained.

“So what if I was loud!?” She shouted again.

… Just don’t shout at someone’s ear, damn it! There’s no automatic-voice-reduction system or anything like it in this game!

I sighed, then decided to continue talking about the matter at hand, ignoring the shouts, “I could untie the rope, but I don’t really gain anything from doing that now, do I?”

“Ah…” She finally seemed to start getting it.

“I’m part of the Chaos faction, remember? I’m not just gonna behave like a heroine and start saving people left and right.” I explained.

“I guess it’s okay to leave Yuu be for now, but… There’s a bigger threat than just the pervert, isn’t there?” She replied.

“Oh? Do continue.” I told her.

“I really want to fight together with him, but I can’t do much over there, so… I’ll help you.” She was blushing a bit and turned her face away as she said that.

“My my, ‘saintess’. Is he truly that important to you?” I snickered.

“B-Blossom!?” She seemed to be confused by my statement, but I gestured to her to keep going, “V-v-v-v-very important!” She exclaimed. She was beet red at this point… How can she be this ashamed by saying this little!?

“I see… Unfortunately though, he’ll probably lose. It can’t be helped. He just isn’t fit for this kind of fight.” I commented, “You know, the reason I agreed to come here with the Perverted Gentleman, was mainly because I wanted to see that stupid friend of yours desperately trying to save you, and yet losing the hopeless battle at the end… I wanted to see your expression once he had fallen.”

She stayed silent… Understandably so. This cliched villainess-like speech was a bit too much, even for me.

No way around it though, let’s just keep going, “Do you want to help him? You want my cooperation? In that case… You’ll have to help me too. You’ll have to take part in my evil plans.” I giggled.

Okay, this should be enough of a setup, right? So please say the right words so that we can end this play already.

“Alright, fine, fine! I get it! I’ll cooperate with you, so please untie this rope!” She exclaimed while forcing some tears to fall off. That was good.

I then started laughing like a maniac, while she started pretending to be extremely disgusted at her own words.

“Very well! Then prepare yourself, for you’re going to sink this city into chaos with me, my lowly servant!” As I exclaimed that, I used my scythe to cut the ropes that were binding her.

And then… She headbutted me again.

“The hell are you doing!?” I asked her.

“You went on for way too long, you idiot! There was no need to go that far!” She exclaimed.

“Is this how you thank your savior, ‘saintess’!?” I asked her.

“Shut up, you chuuni brat!” She exclaimed back.

Seriously… I pull all this act just to make sure the system recognizes me helping her as a chaotic action, and her being forced to do something ‘bad’ for the sake of someone she cares for as an orderly action, and this is how she treats me!?

Well, whatever, “Just make sure to obey me properly!” I told her.

“Ah, fine… Yuu will probably be okay now that he saw that I am free, so he can escape if the fight becomes truly hopeless…” She replied.

“That’s what I wanted to hear, so… Let’s attack the Genocider together!” I ordered. It was finally time for my proper rematch against her!

“I really will have to fight Rena again…? I’m having a stomachache from just thinking about it…” Maria grumbled.

Seeing that our next course of action was set, the Perverted Gentleman gave me a thumbs up before continuing his fight with Ranka… Annoying.

Yuu and Hymn’s Guru also seemed to glance our way before continuing their fight, but I decided to ignore that.

Because now, it was my time to make that woman kneel!

Chapter 189 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part twenty-six

“Why did you suddenly stop? Did we arrive already…?” Hannes groggily asked as he got out of Jun while putting his hand on his mouth.

The two girls in front of me seemed to be giving a pitying smile to Hannes… It was quite unusual to see those two together, but it can’t be helped if they were paired up by the event.

“Hannes, can you fight?” I asked him.

“Uhn… Give me some thirty or so minutes…” He replied.

“You really can’t?” I asked.

“I would be able to if you had driven safely…” And as soon as he said that, he started puking… I guess it can’t be helped.

It’s a bit troublesome to be fighting alone in an open area against only two opponents though. I can’t set up my threads like this, nor can I use some human shields or benefit from my skills that get me stronger when I have many hostiles nearby… This is not an ideal setup for me, I suppose.

“I hope Yuu is okay…” Maria muttered.

“It would certainly be funny if he lost even after I helped you.” Blossom giggled as she said that.

“Don’t jinx it! Ah, whatever! Let’s worry about the one in front of us!” Maria exclaimed.

“Well, the situation is favorable for us for now, but things might become troublesome after that pathetic knight recovers.” Blossom commented while pointing at Hannes.

Seems like they’re about to start… This looks fun. I wonder if I can beat them before Hannes finishes recovering.

“<Flashover>” Maria said.

“<Hide>” I said.

“<Snow Field>” Blossom said.

Maria’s spell created a big bright explosion high up on the skies, while Blossom’s spell spread some thin ice all around the battlefield.

I was planning on using ‘Hide’ to make it hard for them to detect me, but with a bright light up ahead, and with thin ice all over the place, it would be hard to execute that. My steps will definitely leave footprints here, and even if I use <Silent Move>, the ice will still crack with each of my steps, so they’ll still be able to hear me.

In that case… “Kageyama, stretch.” As I said that, I threw a smoke ball high up on the skies, then used <Materialization> to allow Kageyama to grab their ankles.

“<Flash>” Maria said.

“<Icicle Field>” Blossom said.

Maria’s spell made a bright light to stop Kageyama’s movement, and Blossom’s Icicle field reflected the light many times, greatly reducing the areas that Kageyama would be able to move through… They really do know how to counter me, don’t they?

And I can't even try relying on Hanako and Takeo, because Blossom and Maria are both good at using wide-area spells, so they'll easily be able to destroy the insects summoned by my servants.

"<Flaming Cane>" Maria buffed her weapon.

"<Freezing Blade>" And so did Blossom.

Now what to do? I don't think most of my ranged attacks, like my poisonous needles, will be very useful because they can just be blasted away by their spells, so… Let's move closer then! "<Destruction Game: Slaughter's Organs>"

I also used <Jet Propulsion> to quickly get close to them, but Blossom immediately reacted to my dash and tried to cut me with her scythe, so I had to rely on Kageyama's shadow wrapping itself around my waist to pull me to the side, changing my trajectory.

"<Unmistakable Misguided Love: Ideal Woman>" Maria used another buff.

"<Earthshaking Vainglory: I Shine Alone>" And so did Blossom.

I ducked below some flames that Maria shot towards me, then used my dagger to parry a scythe attack from Blossom.

Next, I threw a poison needle towards Blossom who had lost her balance when her attack was parried, and followed up with some poisonous smoke bombs.

"<Devilish Ruler>" I said.

Both Blossom and Maria instantly reacted to my smoke bombs by freezing and then igniting the gas, pushing it towards my direction. I had to use 'Light Wall' to create a foothold that allowed me to safely jump away from the incoming smoke.

"<Spiritual Sublimation: Death and Rebirth>" Maria said.

"<Body Sublimation: Solitary Queen>" Blossom said.

I then transformed my dagger into an odachi and rushed towards the two, swinging the sword horizontally towards Maria.

“<Divine Blasphemy: Childish Naivety>” I casted.

“<Divine Possession: Sun Maiden>” Maria casted.

“<Divine Blasphemy: Proud Brave>” Blossom casted.

My odachi pierced through Maria, but her body disappeared, leaving a hot haze behind it… Must have been a skill that’s similar to my <Shadow Double>.

I turned around and saw that both Maria and Blossom were a bit far from me. That’s nice, we can enjoy ‘playing’ for a while longer then.

“She’ll just cross this gap between us in no time…” Maria commented.

“I know. It’s hard to use wide-area attacks when she’s too close.” Blossom replied.

“Guess I should try taking your heads over there, then?” I asked them.

And then, I started chasing the two who had gained some distance from me… Are we playing tag now? I am quite good at it, you know?

Chapter 190 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part twenty-seven

(Maria's PoV)

"She's coming!" Blossom exclaimed.

Why is her AGI so high!? I'm running away with everything I have while bombarding her with spells, and she is still closing the distances on us!

I have no idea what we'd do if Rena's driving hadn't knocked Hannes out. Facing those two together would be crazy!

"Can't you do anything else!?" Blossom asked me.

"I'm doing what I can!" I exclaimed.

Blossom's ice was supposed to be slowing Rena down too, but she's just walking on top of the shadows, so the slippery frozen ground isn't helping at all…

"<Heat Absorption>" I casted.

"<Freezing Cold>" Blossome casted.

"It's getting cold, isn't it?" Rena commented.

I'm taking the heat of her body away, and Blossom is lowering the temperature of the battlefield, so her physical condition should be debuffed by the excessively low temperature, but… Why am I barely noticing any difference!? Why is she still closing the distance on us!?

I'll have to stack some more debuffs on her then… But before that, "I really need to get rid of those shadows! <Sunny Weather>!"

"Oh…" Rena commented as she saw my spell go into effect.

It worked! It was a bit of a gamble that a cloud-clearing spell would also get rid of Rena's smokescreen, but it worked! Now Blossom's ice can reflect the sunlight and make Rena unable to walk on shadows!

"… You must be kidding me." Both me and Blossom said together, as we saw Rena rushing our way by stomping the ice. As each of her steps broke the ice below her, she wouldn't need to worry about slipping on it, nor would she need to slow down to deal with the hard to walk on ground… This is ridiculous!

"Stop being amazed at her and do something, you flat 'saintess'!" Blossom exclaimed.

"You said something you shouldn't have, you chuuni shoujo villainess!" I replied.

"What did you say!?" Blossom replied.

"Wanna come at me then!?" I exclaimed.

"… <Shadow Spear>" Rena casted.

"Whoa!" Me and Blossom exclaimed in unison as we barely dodged Shadow Spears aimed at our heads… Too dangerous! This is no time to bicker with Blossom!

I looked towards her and we both nodded… Temporary truce! No bickering until we beat Rena! Mankind can only unite when faced with a greater threat!

“Take that! <Heat Absorption> <Heat Absorption> <Heat Absorption> <Heat Absorption> <Heat Absorption>!” I spammed those spells.

“<Dark Hail>!” Blossom casted.

“Ah… I’m taking frostbite damage now… How troublesome.” Rena commented.

It’s finally showing results! She’s finally taking damage and losing physical prowess because of the frostbite and the hypothermia!

It’s also helpful that the darkness damage of Blossom for some reason increases the frostbite damage. It’s weird, but I’m not complaining!

The ‘Dark Hail’ also got her stuck inside a solid dark ice prison, which is a relief, since she was about to get into melee range again.

Sorry, Rena! I may have lost last time when I fought you with Yuu, but I have no intentions of losing again!

“<Meteor Shower>” Rena used.

“<Starlight Wall>!” I hurriedly casted.

“<New Moon Curtain>!” Blossom hurriedly protected herself too.

That was way too dangerous! Even Rena was damaged by this! I’d definitely die if she got a direct hit! What’s up with this self-destructive attack!?

“Don’t go throwing those things at other people, Rena!” I exclaimed.

“Why wouldn’t I?” She asked me.

“She gave a serious reply…” I commented with only a bit of disbelief.

“How is that girl this stupid?” Blossom said.

I mean, she isn't stupid… And it's fun to play around like this in VR too, you know? Even if Rena's murderous intent is a bit too realistic…

I think both Rena and Blossom should enjoy the game without messing as much with other people, but… Well, let's not worry about this for now.

"Rena, check." I told her.

"What do you-?" Rena, who had just broken free of her dark ice prison, started saying that… Before she fell down into the hole that Blossom secretly made with her ice while Rena was imprisoned.

You thought I was using 'Heat Absorption' just for the debuff!? Think again! "<The Sun's Flower Smiles From Above>!" Now, with this divine skill that doubles my damage, critical rate and critical damage multiplier for fire and light attacks, take on the ultimate skill, Rena!

"<Garves, Sun God whose power comes from the great seven-colored god. My faith in you asks to be rewarded, please destroy your enemies and protect this humble lamb of yours, Maria. Your blessing…" With limited physical capabilities, locked inside a small tight hole, and chilled by my 'Heat Absorption' and Blossom's ice… How will you dodge this, Rena!? "Please give it to me!>" Suffer the full might of both Fire Damage and Thermal Shock! "<Sun God's Wrath>!"

Chapter 191 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part twenty-eight

“That was a dangerous one.” Hannes commented.

“Oh…? You better now?” I asked him.

I was expecting to take some heavy damage from Maria’s attack, but before it reached me, Hannes appeared and created an earth dome surrounding us, which stopped the Oracle skill. That was a nice surprise.

… However, he is still quite pale and has his hand in front of his mouth. I don’t think he is okay…

“Ah, Jun took me here by the way… Slowly. With safe driving.” Hannes suddenly said. So that’s how he arrived even though he was in this state…

“What about this dome?” I asked. Even if Hannes was also an Order player, I don’t think he should have easily been able to stop Maria’s Oracle when it was aimed at a Chaos player like me.

“Ah, it’s the ‘Earth God’s Embrace’ skill. It completely blocks any attacks.” He explained.

“Oh?” Now that’s quite something, “How long is its cooldown?” I asked.

“Why should I teach you the intricacies of my skill when we’re going to become enemies later…?” He asked me, but I just waited for his answer,

“One week of cooldown.”

“That’s useless.” I replied.

“Shut up! It’s the only skill that can endure an Oracle unscathed!

“Ah… Ugh…” Hannes’ yells seemed to get his condition worse, so he was now trying really hard to stop himself from puking again.

Well, I guess this skill isn’t entirely useless. It’s quite possible I might have been defeated by that Oracle after all, so Hannes really did save me this time… I guess I’ll have to reward Jun later for bringing Hannes here.

And after a small wait, Hannes seemed to have recovered a bit, so he asked me, “Well, what are you going to do now? There are two of them over there, but the Oracle has a long cooldown, so we could just throw two Oracles at them? They won’t be able to endure it if only Blossom can use hers to counter ours.”

“We could do that, but… It wouldn’t be any fun to simply overpower them with big skills. Drink this instead.” I gave him a bottle as I replied.

“What’s this?” He asked.

“Poison.” I answered.

“You wanna kill your savior!?” He exclaimed.

“Nothing like that. I don’t have any medicine for carsickness, but this poison can numb you to its effects. You’ll also lose some other sensations though.” I explained.

“Ah… Well, I guess that fine. I already went through something similar because of Kellin anyways, so I can handle some numbness.” He replied.

“… Kellin?” I asked.

Hannes sighed, “My party’s spearman.”

“Ah…” So there was a person with this name in his party… I don’t really remember the names of his friends… I guess this was my bad, “O-oh well. For now, we should be safe from Maria’s Oracle, so let’s just beat them up.”

“Don’t just change the topic like that!” Hannes exclaimed.

“So please drink the potion so as to let us get started?” I asked him.

Hannes sighed once more, drank it, then said, “Tastes horrible.”

Is that so? I didn’t pay any attention to its taste when making it, but I guess it’s bad if it’s bitter. Poison should be tasteless and odorless to make it harder to detect after all.

“Then, please remove the dome.” I told him.

“You sure?” He asked me.

“Yes. I want to enjoy fighting together with you, who are usually hostile to me… I’ll be counting on you, alright?” I replied.

“… Fine!” As he exclaimed that, he released the dome… And then, we were immediately bombarded with fire and ice spells.

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(Maria’s PoV)

“This can’t be serious…” I muttered as the smoke cleared out, and I saw an earth dome in the place where Rena’s body should be… What kind of ridiculous skill is that!? It stopped my Oracle!?

… My pride is hurt.

“What is this dome…? Maybe… Hannes?” Blossom commented.

“Ah… Yeah, that might be it.” I replied.

The hero that came at the last second to save Rena, who was about to be defeated… Such a cheap main character move! Why is he the one that can save her!? I'm so jealous! I wish I was the one who had this kind of opportunity! "So Yuu isn't the only enemy blocking my path…" I muttered.

"What nonsense are you spouting? Get ready for when the dome opens!" Blossom exclaimed.

"Understood!" I replied. I'm gonna bombard those two with everything I have as soon as this stupid dome opens up!

And I'll also be sure to add Hannes to the list of people that I, as Rena's Guardian, need to be wary of… "It's nice that she's getting more friends, but still…" I muttered.

"I dunno what's going on in your head, but it's a good thing that you're eager to kill him." Then, as soon as Blossom said that, the dome started opening up, "Now!"

With this, both of us started bombarding Rena and Hannes with our spells.

Chapter 192 – The Second Event – Collapsing Kingdom – part twenty-nine

Seeing the spells coming our way, Hannes used earth magic to raise a wall to block them, then proceeded to create a different way out of the hole for us with his magic.

Blossom and Maria quickly broke through the wall that Hannes had raised, and then realized that we were leaving from a different direction. However, by then we were already about to get out of the hole.

They did find us as we were leaving and threw spells towards our current position, but… Too late! “Hannes!” I exclaimed.

“<Earth Pillar>!” As he created large pillars nearby, I quickly set up a bunch of threads between us and our attackers, blocking their incoming spells.

And then, making use of the pillars that he kept on making, I could start setting up more threads to start moving through the air.

“I’ll burn all your threads!” Maria exclaimed as I jumped on my threads.

Blossom also tried aiming some ice spells towards me as I moved, but… Are you two sure this is a good idea? You have more than just one opponent here.

“Don’t ignore me just for that woman! <Condensed Earthquake>!” Hannes casted.

“Ah!” Maria exclaimed.

“Damn that guy!” Blossom yelled.

As Hannes slammed his axe against the ground, he created a strong earthquake with a gravitational field around Maria and Blossom, which made them lose their balance and miss the attacks aimed at me.

“<Dust Blast>!” Hannes exclaimed, creating a smoke cloud between me, him, Maria and Blossom.

“<Stealth>” Making use of the opportunity, I hid myself from them.

“Blossom!” Maria exclaimed.

“I know! <Blizzard>!” Blossom then used her strong chilly winds to blow the dust away, but by now I was already hidden.

I also attached a thread to Hannes so that I could give him signals on what to do next. Even if his body was numbed right now, he could still feel that if I put enough strength on the pull of the thread.

“<Earth’s Crust>!” Reacting to my signal, Hannes used this next, creating an earth dome surrounding the general location that Blossom and Maria should be at. As Blossom’s ‘Blizzard’ was still going on, the cold winds will now hit the cage that locked them, damaging them both.

However, a concentrated fire blast broke through the cage and went directly towards Hannes. It was a good way of solving their problem, but… If you use such a concentrated blast, I’ll easily be able to pinpoint your location even with a blizzard going on, you know?

“<Ichijouji Meteor>” As I used this skill, I threw one of my biggest explosives towards Maria and Blossom. It also had acid, poison and the like inside it, and because I am currently under the effect of ‘Stealth’, they won’t

have much time to react to this attack because they'll only realize it when it's pretty close to them… Like about now.

"Whoa!" Maria exclaimed.

"We gotta avoid that!" Blossom shouted.

"<Earth Shake>!" Hannes used his skill to make an earthquake. Their lost balance made them unable to dodge the skill in time, so they had no choice but to use defensive skills instead.

Then, as a mushroom rose high up in the skies from the explosion, I drank an antidote, then activated 'Stealth' again.

"We somehow stopped it on time…" Maria commented.

"I'll definitely kill that guy for this." Blossom said.

It was a bit surprising that they were still on their feet even after that, but I suppose that, with overlapping defensives skills, as well as Maria's buffs and heals it's understandable that they could withstand the explosion.

However, even if Maria can cleanse status aliments with her support spells, that is not of much use when they're in the middle of a poisonous cloud, is it?

"We gotta leave this area!" Maria exclaimed.

Too late though, "<Fatal Blow>" I got behind her and pierced her throat with my shortsword… She smiled and gave me a troubled laugh when she realized it was over.

I then threw a dagger to Blossom's forehead, and killed her too just as she was turning around to see what had happened to Maria.

"Damn it…!" Blossom said as she started disappearing. She had an annoyed expression on her face.

"So lovely…" Were Maria last words as she too disappeared.

And that's a wrap. I must have earned quite a few points from killing two people that were targets for the event, which is pretty nice. It would be better if I was able to capture them, but I don't think it was a real possibility, so killing was for the best in those circumstances.

"And done, Hannes… Wait, what are you doing?" As I left the area filled with poisonous gas, I saw that Hannes was lying on the ground… He didn't seem to be well.

And instead of replying, Hannes moved his finger a bit… I think he was checking his status with this.

"The medicine you gave me… Why was it a slow-acting poison!?" Hannes exclaimed.

<The second official event is over!>

And just as those words echoed in our heads, Hannes HP seemed to be depleted, so his body started disappearing.

… Did I accidentally mix up some normal poisons on top of the numbing poison? This was supposed to be used on enemies, so I kinda did it out of habit… That was my bad.

Then, just before Hannes finished disappearing, I received a message, "I really do hate you."

… I started giggling after reading Hannes' message. He truly is quite the entertaining person.

Chapter 193 – The end of the Second Event

“Hi, everyone! Thanks for participating! It’s the management team speaking!” The usual boss appeared on the screen.

“Boss, please take it seriously.” And the secretary, as usual, admonished him.

“Come on, Shii! It’s an event, I have to entertain the players!” The boss exclaimed.

… Shii? Is that the name of the secretary? I don’t think he should be leaking her personal details like that.

Then, the screen above had its image change to some peaceful plains for a small while… Until it changed back to the usual boss, “Then, time to announce the rankings, everyone!”

The boss had a sign hanging from his neck that read, ‘I have a loose mouth and no brain inside my head’… The secretary behind him also seemed to be quite angry.

Oh well, let’s just look at the rankings and leave this at that.

———

From: KSO Management Team.

Subject: Results of the Second Event.

The event results will be divided both on overall amount of points obtained by your country, as well as the points obtained by your pair. The top 5 contributors for each category will also be publicly shown.

Country ranking:

#1: Wallace Kingdom – 5,008,450 points.

#2: Grand Duchy of Carmelia – 5,002,000 points.

#3: Bourfoin Empire – 3,805,450 points.

#4: Kingdom of Hermagne – 3,155,000 points.

#5: Elrond Republic – 2,258,550 points.

Pair ranking:

#1: Absolutely Inviolable Area and Philia – 3,155,800 points.

#2: Rena and Hannes – 3,104,500 points.

#3: Dark Priest and Leader of the Swimsuits-Stockings Alliance – 728,000 points.

#4: Perverted Gentleman and Blossom – 687,000 points.

#5: Yuu and Maria – 654,000 points.

Just like in the last event, you'll be able to exchange the points you earned for special rewards. The points expire in one week though, so make sure to spend them before the deadline.

-KSO management

———

Jeru beat me again? I did win on the country ranking at least, but it's frustrating to lose twice in a row on the individual rankings… I'll get him on the next time.

"And just like last time, there are some really strange numbers on the top two places, aren't there!?" The boss suddenly exclaimed.

"The same two people as before…" The secretary sighed.

"You two really made your own countries and dominated the rankings, didn't you!? It's hilarious!" The boss said.

"Don't laugh at the pain that they caused to the story development team…" The secretary admonished him.

"Come on! They made their own countries and used their entire armies to kidnap people for the sake of gathering as many points as possible! You gotta praise them for that!" The boss said while still laughing.

Well, seems like both me and Jeru had roughly the same idea then? Borrowing Eren's soldiers was for the best, but it's a pity that it didn't lead to my victory.

Also… I believe the Grand Duchy of Carmelia was a small country that claimed independence from the Empire? Yuu told me that the Empire tried taking them back, but a disaster kept them from succeeding… Could this disaster be Jeru? It would explain the current circumstances, I suppose.

"In any case, remember to spend your points, everyone!" The boss said.

“Points earned by the pair will be split evenly between both members. Points earned by the country will be split evenly across all players that joined said country.” The secretary explained.

“And that’s all! See you laters!” The boss waved.

“Thank you for participating.” As the secretary said that, the transmission ended.

Now what to do with all these points…? I guess I’ll use it to improve my equipment? Been a while since I changed my gear, after all… Also, a new region should be opened up soon, and it wouldn’t be hurt to be as strong as possible at the time of its release.

Okay, so… I guess I should see if Eren is fine now? Though he might get angry about my visit.

******

(Philia’s PoV (Jeru’s partner for the event))

“Hey, wait!” I exclaimed as Jeru walked away from me… Why is he walking so fast!? We’re not in a battle against anyone, so he doesn’t need to make use of his higher AGI! “Wait up already!” He kept on walking… Why is he ignoring me!? “Hey, can’t you hear me!?” … “Wait up already…”

Seriously, stop it! I’m desperately calling out to you, so stop ignoring me! I’ll kill you if you keep acting like that!

… Never mind, I’ll be beaten up in seconds.

“Wait up, Jeru!” I exclaimed.

He stopped moving, sighed, then said, “What is it?”

“What do you mean with what!? I’ve been calling you for a while!” Why is he having this annoyed face!? I’m the wronged one here!

“You remember that you gave sweets to a crying child, don’t you?” He suddenly asked me.

“Uhn… Yeah?” I replied.

“So I’m ignoring you to adjust the karma value.” He explained.

“For real!?” Come on! We’re just playing a game! Don’t start ignoring me just for this damn karma! Being ignored already hurts by default, but considering some digital numbers as enough of a reason to ignore me is just sad…

Though even if I tell him that, he’ll probably just tell me something along the lines of ‘then don’t go making my karma go up.’

I sighed, then asked him, “Got it… But where are you going in such a hurry anyways?”

“You lonely or something?” He asked back.

“A bit…” Why do I have to be lonely for him to not run away from me…? “And uhn… Thank you. We wouldn’t have been able to protect the country without you.”

“Oh my, you’re worried about that, young lady?” He snickered.

“Don’t call me that…” I replied.

“My deepest apologies, lady Philia.” He said while giving me a mocking bow.

“You’re horrible.” I replied.

Seriously, ‘lady Philia’? I can’t believe that I, a player, ended up somehow getting the title of important NPC. ‘The deceased daughter of the Grand Duke of Carmelia has come back to life!’ I couldn’t even believe my ears when I heard that and ended up becoming a young lady… Well, it’s helpful to me since I didn’t get any fighting-related skills at all though, politics just suit me better.

“In any case, don’t worry too much about it. If the country needs help with its defense again, just send me a message and I’ll come to help.” Jeru told me.

“… Will you really come? Won’t you abandon me with a message saying something like ‘my karma will raise too much if I help, so you’re on your own’!?” I asked him.

He didn’t reply… “Hey, answer me!” I exclaimed.

“Just what do you want…?” He asked.

What else!? I need some way of trusting your word! I’m in a pitiful position as I can’t even defend my own country without relying on you, so I need to be sure you’ll come!

“Look, it would be bad if I lost my base, alright? So I’ll come to help if you need me.” Jeru told me.

“But how can I be sure…?” I asked.

“Well… How about this?” He then put a badge on my hand.

“What’s this?” I asked as I inspected it… It seems to have some family crest in it? Why did he give me that?

“It’s the crest of my family outside the game. The Kujo family.” He explained.

“The what!?” I exclaimed.

“Giving this to you is a promise swore on the name of my family. So hold on to it as proof of our agreement, alright?

“… Ah, don’t try to abuse it though.” Jeru said some unbelievable things just now…

I sighed, “Guess you must be quite rich, huh?”

So, while I suffer on my day-to-day life, this guy just enjoys the easy life as a noble, huh? Good to know that this is the kind of 'friend' that I have…

"It's not like all nobles are rich, but I don't really have any trouble with living expenses… Do you despise rich people perchance?" He asked me. I guess my tone made it a bit too obvious.

"… I hate them.

"But I do need you, so I'll keep this." I said as I held his family crest tightly.

"Then that's good enough. I'm going." As he said that, he turned his back on me and started moving away at his stupidly high speed.

"Fine, just go!" I shouted at him.

Now how will I explain everything to that annoying grand duke…? I need to reassure him that the Empire won't attack us somehow…

Maybe I should try contacting Hermagne to make an alliance of sorts? It could be a way of getting a safety net besides Jeru.

… Though why does it look like I'm the only player actively trying to participate in politics? I mean, there should be other people that didn't invest too much on the battle-related skills…

Well, not all of them were acquaintances of someone like Jeru, I guess. That definitely makes a difference… I mean, if we name our territory as something belonging to Absolutely Inviolable Area, then we probably won't be attacked by any country due to the fear of retaliation after all, that's how crazy this guy's power is.

… Though the Genocider might attack us if we make this kind of claim… Did I just raise a flag?

Chapter 194 – Official Bulletin Board – fifteen

[That Person] Talking About Celebrities – Thread 451 [This Person]

1. Nameless Adventurer

This is a general chat thread.

Let’s write freely.

However, if you don’t abide the basic rules, this thread will disappear.

Previous thread: http: // ******

>> 980 Next thread, please.

5. Nameless Adventurer

Seems like we’re finally getting a second official event.

6. Nameless Adventurer

Why ‘Official’? Was there a player-made event before this one or something?

7. Nameless Adventurer

There’s no way this will get more exciting than the player-made event though, lol!

8. Nameless Adventurer

As if. This one has way more people playing.

9. Nameless Adventurer

That’s right.

10. Nameless Adventurer

Btw, the people on the top of the karma rankings are kind of always the same, aren’t they?

11. Nameless Adventurer

And Genocider’s value became even more absurd. Blossom can’t even compete…

12. Nameless Adventurer

> 10

There are some fluctuations within the top 20, but it’s hard for new people to catch-up to the older players.

13. Nameless Adventurer

> 11

At least she tries, lol!

14. Nameless Adventurer

Well, the top ones are definitely fixed at this point though.

15. Nameless Adventurer

Order

#1: Perverted Gentleman – Karma: 308

Chaos

#1: Rena – Karma: -411

Neutral

#1: Absolutely Inviolable Area – Karma: 0

If the top 3 ever stopped being those people, things would be really strange.

16. Nameless Adventurer

> 15

The really strange thing, is having the Perverted Gentleman as the top Order player.

17. Nameless Adventurer

Lol

18. Nameless Adventurer

Let's not talk about that…

19. Nameless Adventurer

[Breaking News] KSO Management is actually held hostage by the Perverted Gentleman!

20. Nameless Adventurer

Lol

21. Nameless Adventurer

Lol

22. Nameless Adventurer

Lol

23. Nameless Adventurer

> 19

That’s a reasonable guess, lol!

24. Nameless Adventurer

> 19

You crazy! You’re gonna get erased!

25. Nameless Adventurer

And I now started imagining unpleasant things…

26. Nameless Adventurer

Like the management team being embraced by the Perverted Gentleman?

27. Nameless Adventurer

Seriously?

28. Nameless Adventurer

Yes?

29. Nameless Adventurer

You’re all crazy.

30. Nameless Adventurer

Thread is derailing as much as always, I guess.

31. Nameless Adventurer

I bet the Perverted Gentleman is actually a serious person offline though.

32. Nameless Adventurer

There was actually a case of a player using a young girl avatar confessing to him, and he actually tried giving her serious life advice when he heard that… Turns out it was just a joke confession, so they both laughed it off.

33. Nameless Adventurer

He can be surprisingly friendly!?

34. Nameless Adventurer

That was truly a gentlemanly act…

35. Nameless Adventurer

That's the top Order player alright.

36. Nameless Adventurer

I'm sorry for doubting his orderliness.

37. Nameless Adventurer

Now I'm starting to wonder… Would he actually have about the same amount of raw Karma value as the Genocider if he stopped acting like a pervert?

38. Nameless Adventurer

Oh gods, this is hilarious!

… Wait, you might actually be right! Lololol!

39. Nameless Adventurer

I mean… He surely lost a lot of karma from his public exhibitions and imprisonments…

40. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah… How can he be at the top of the Order faction when he keeps doing this kind of thing?

I'm gonna report him for suspicious karma value that don't seem to reflect his actions.

41. Nameless Adventurer

Oh, sure, let's do it. Reported!

42. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, that's valid. No way those numbers make sense! Reported!

43. Nameless Adventurer

I mean, it is kinda strange that the top 3 players of each faction are such weirdos… The top Order player at least should be a normie, right? Reported!

44. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, I don't want to imagine an alternate reality where the Perverted Gentleman has the highest raw amount of Karma Value if he didn't act as a pervert. There must be something wrong here. Reported!

45. Nameless Adventurer

Does he even do good deeds in the first place? Reported!

46. Nameless Adventurer

> 40

> 41

> 42

> 43

> 44

> 45

I got an automated e-mail from the management team saying something about ‘due to a large number of reports, we…’

47. Nameless Adventurer

Lol

48. Nameless Adventurer

Lol

49. Nameless Adventurer

LMAO!

50. Nameless Adventurer

Oh wow, I can’t believe you guys!

51. Nameless Adventurer

I mean, it’s not like it’s unfair to report him just from his pervert activities anyways…

52. Nameless Adventurer

A good point.

53. Nameless Adventurer

Only a truly perverted gentleman can be allowed to walk around the city while looking like that.

54. Nameless Adventurer

No no, he can’t do it either. A soldier arrested him just a small while ago, after all.

55. Nameless Adventurer

Lol!

******

[That Person] Talking About Celebrities – Thread 459 [This Person]

1. Nameless Adventurer

This is a general chat thread.

Let’s write freely.

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Previous thread: http: // ******

>> 980 Next thread, please.

241. Nameless Adventurer

[Sad News] An expedition force of the Empire just had an unfortunate encounter with Absolutely Inviolable Area and is getting wiped out.

242. Nameless Adventurer

> encounter with Absolutely Inviolable Area

It’s amazing how terrifying those words are.

243. Nameless Adventurer

Let’s hope he won’t attack us to adjust his Karma…

244. Nameless Adventurer

[Breaking News] The imperial detachment just got wiped out!

245. Nameless Adventurer

Well, can’t say I’m surprised.

246. Nameless Adventurer

So fast! Lol!

247. Nameless Adventurer

They fell way too fast! Lol!

248. Nameless Adventurer

The Empire’s army is second to none… In how fast they can lose!

249. Nameless Adventurer

Lol

250. Nameless Adventurer

I mean, Absolutely Inviolable Area also has one of those crazy passives that the Genocider has, doesn’t he? Those that get them stronger the more enemies are nearby and all that.

251. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, those two are the peak solo players for sure… And they really don’t care for the results of their actions, which makes it all worse.

252. Nameless Adventurer

At least Genocider is purposefully a solo player… Absolutely Inviolable Area is a solo player due to the consequences of his actions.

253. Nameless Adventurer

I mean, nobody will party up with the guy that backstabs you on the moment that his karma rises…

254. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, we once got our entire party wiped (except for him, of course) during a boss battle just because he needed to adjust his karma…

255. Nameless Adventurer

Is there anyone still crazy enough to party with Absolutely Inviolable Area…?

256. Nameless Adventurer

Well, I guess Genocider is saner than at least one person, isn't she!? Lol!

257. Nameless Adventurer

Well, on Genocider's case, anyone that tries to take the initiative into partying up is going to end up decapitated, but it works out if she is the one that decides to party up first.

258. Nameless Adventurer

I really envy Yuu…

259. Nameless Adventurer

Genocider is hard to party up with.

Absolutely Inviolable Area is hard to stay at a party with.

260. Nameless Adventurer

Wouldn’t those two be the strongest party ever if they decided to join forces?

261. Nameless Adventurer

Not just the strongest, but also the worst party ever…

262. Nameless Adventurer

Let’s add the Perverted Gentleman to the mix.

263. Nameless Adventurer

Terrifying…

264. Nameless Adventurer

Too dangerous!

265. Nameless Adventurer

Don’t lump those people together!

266. Nameless Adventurer

I’m now imagining Genocider happily throwing bombs at you, while Absolutely Inviolable Area holds the frontline… And the Perverted Gentleman just shows off his body in the back, because he doesn’t need to do anything.

267. Nameless Adventurer

That’s way too hilarious! Lol!

268. Nameless Adventurer

What a hellish image…

269. Nameless Adventurer

Who is the Perverted Gentleman?

270. Nameless Adventurer

Anyone wanna enlighten the poor lamb?

271. Nameless Adventurer

Don’t wanna… Just talking about it gives me the shivers! Lol!

272. Nameless Adventurer

Don’t worry too much about it, folks. If this monstrous party ever became a thing, you’d all die so fast that you wouldn’t even be able to take mental damage from the Perverted Gentleman.

273. Nameless Adventurer

Too true, lol!

274. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, us mobs just can’t compete! Lol!

275. Nameless Adventurer

Would probably need all other top players to try fighting them! Lol!

276. Nameless Adventurer

On a serious note, is there anyone that can actually fight against Genocider or Absolutely Inviolable Area and not get stomped?

277. Nameless Adventurer

Hannes has a proven track record of holding his own against those two.

278. Nameless Adventurer

I think all 5 top players (if you count the ones right below those two) should be able to fight more or less on even grounds actually.

279. Nameless Adventurer

Well, Maria, Blossom and Hannes should be indeed capable of fighting properly, but… Who else would fit?

280. Nameless Adventurer

Dunno?

281. Nameless Adventurer

Hannes, Perverted Gentleman, Maria, Blossom, Yuu… Those 5, I guess?

282. Nameless Adventurer

> 281

It's 'Lady Maria' for you.

283. Nameless Adventurer

Oh no.

284. Nameless Adventurer

The mad religious folks are here!

285. Nameless Adventurer

You all can't respect other people's beliefs? Good grief…

286. Nameless Adventurer

Anyone got popcorn?

287. Nameless Adventurer

I abandoned Maria's faith.

288. Nameless Adventurer

To abandon the lady is the greatest sin.

289. Nameless Adventurer

I've never seen such a disgusting heretic.

290. Nameless Adventurer

Too many worshippers in this thread!

291. Nameless Adventurer

What's even up with this worshipping…?

292. Nameless Adventurer

Well, they're basically people that worship Saintess Maria, who is a famous player within KSO. They actually have a structured hierarchy within their faith and have gone far beyond what anyone could possibly expect from an in-game religion! Even NPCs have now joined the faith of Lady Maria!

There's actually a website with more information, so if you're interested, you can see a more in-depth explanation at http: // ******

293. Nameless Adventurer

… Is this person trying to recruit others to the faith while disguising it as an explanation?

294. Nameless Adventurer

They really come out of nowhere, don't they!? Lol!

295. Nameless Adventurer

Well, it happens every time someone mentions Maria…

296. Nameless Adventurer

I wonder if you need to pay a fee to enter the faith…?

297. Nameless Adventurer

Someone fell for it! Lol!

298. Nameless Adventurer

Let us all be saved, in the name of the lady…

299. Nameless Adventurer

Just what are those people saying!? Lol!

300. Nameless Adventurer

Can’t be helped, just take it for what it is.

Chapter 195 – Official Bulletin Board – sixteen

[Finally] Second Event Thread 1 [It's Started]

1. Nameless Adventurer

This is a general chat thread.

Let's write freely.

However, if you don't abide the basic rules, this thread will disappear.

Previous thread: http: // ******

>> 980 Next thread, please.

341. Nameless Adventurer

It's only been a few hours since it started, but what's the current situation?

342. Nameless Adventurer

> 341

Hymn's Guru is making his crazy prayers in the middle of the city, and Ranka is chanting Buddhist sutras to maintain her sanity.

343. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, I have no clue what that means…

344. Nameless Adventurer

If you hear Hannes screaming somewhere nearby, you're probably gonna have a bad time.

345. Nameless Adventurer

By the way, who is Hymn's Guru? A veteran of Maria's faith or something?

346. Nameless Adventurer

More like the founder.

347. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, he is really into that faith.

348. Nameless Adventurer

I wonder what led him to create the church of Maria in the first place…

349. Nameless Adventurer

There are some truly crazy people out there…

350. Nameless Adventurer

It's all the fault of our education!

351. Nameless Adventurer

Of our education, culture, sports and etc, you mean?

352. Nameless Adventurer

Oh, and here comes the hijacking!

353. Nameless Adventurer

People really like to derail these threads, don’t they?

354. Nameless Adventurer

Well, moderation on those forums is pretty lax.

355. Nameless Adventurer

Do not worry everyone, for Ranka’s sutras will save you!

356. Nameless Adventurer

Ranka’s sutras will bring Hymn’s Guru back to sanity!

357. Nameless Adventurer

What the…? Lol

358. Nameless Adventurer

The average players all get confused by these talks, lol!

359. Nameless Adventurer

Usual chaos stuff! Lololol!

360. Nameless Adventurer

I guess they’re just doing the minimum amount of crazy things necessary in order to reach the top rankings?

361. Nameless Adventurer

Then I’ll stay as a mid-level player for the rest of my life…

362. Nameless Adventurer

You can’t achieve anything without sacrifices! Forsake your humanity!

363. Nameless Adventurer

Nah, that’s too much.

364. Nameless Adventurer

Lol.

365. Nameless Adventurer

Genocider > No ethics

Absolutely inviolable area > No social skills

Perverted Gentleman > No shame

Hymn’s Guru > No common sense

Well, I guess they all did sacrifice something.

366. Nameless Adventurer

Kinda amazing that Hannes can remain at the top while still being a pretty normal person though, isn’t it?

367. Nameless Adventurer

Maybe we just didn’t find what is his crazy aspect yet?

368. Nameless Adventurer

Poor guy, can’t even get a bit of trust after all that he already did.

369. Nameless Adventurer

Well, there was the child incident.

370. Nameless Adventurer

Bring this one up in front of Hannes, and he’ll get angry.

371. Nameless Adventurer

Are you seriously bringing up the arrow that Myra shot on the day of Genocider's debut in the game? Yeah, sure, it did pierce an NPC child, but it was the Genocider that used the child as a human shield.

Also, while this still bothers Myra, the Genocider probably forgot about it already.

372. Nameless Adventurer

My bad…

373. Nameless Adventurer

Be honest everyone, Hannes and his party certainly made a good impression on everyone.

374. Nameless Adventurer

On a side note, I don't recommend anyone doing the kind of thing that Genocider did… NPCs are a bit too humanized in this game, so it feels kinda bad to kill them whimsically.

375. Nameless Adventurer

And yet, the Genocider doesn't even hesitate to kill them…

376. Nameless Adventurer

I wonder if the Genocider even cared to look things up, in order to find out that NPCs don't respawn.

377. Nameless Adventurer

Well, I doubt she doesn't know it by now, since the important NPCs she killed never came back.

378. Nameless Adventurer

And she doesn't slow down on her slaughter at all! Lol!

379. Nameless Adventurer

Whether it’s a player or an NPC, it doesn’t matter! Slay them all! Lol!

380. Nameless Adventurer

She’s kinda barbaric…

381. Nameless Adventurer

You what!? Did you just call lady Rena a barbarian!?

382. Nameless Adventurer

How dare you say such disgusting thing about lady Rena!?

383. Nameless Adventurer

I can’t believe someone would say such absurdity about lady Rena…

384. Nameless Adventurer

Oh dear…

385. Nameless Adventurer

After Maria’s church, we now have to deal with the Genorers…

386. Nameless Adventurer

The scary people keep appearing! Lol!

387. Nameless Adventurer

How can you compare our devotion to lady Rena to that crazy faith of Maria!? Don’t go bringing our worship of the Apostle of Chaos down to the level of that Saintess with a mad church!

388. Nameless Adventurer

And things are going wild!

389. Nameless Adventurer

> 388

You better watch your back, or we'll come for you too!

390. Nameless Adventurer

> 388

Yeah, don't mess with who you shouldn't!

391. Nameless Adventurer

So scary!

392. Nameless Adventurer

They feel more like gangsters and less like worshippers…

393. Nameless Adventurer

The Genorers surely know how to be scary, lol!

394. Nameless Adventurer

Lol!

395. Nameless Adventurer

I wonder what they do when they actually meet up with the Genocider.

396. Nameless Adventurer

At that point, it's on the lady's hands.

397. Nameless Adventurer

On the lady’s hands…?

398. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, she’ll do what she wants, as usual, and we’ll watch as she slaughters everyone.

399. Nameless Adventurer

That… Actually makes sense?

400. Nameless Adventurer

Surprisingly reasonable.

401. Nameless Adventurer

There’s some sanity even among the madmen.

402. Nameless Adventurer

The Chaotic organization is the sensible one, and the Orderly organization is the crazy one, lol!

403. Nameless Adventurer

Lol!

******

[As Expected] Second Event Thread 17 [Those Two]

1. Nameless Adventurer

This is a general chat thread.

Let’s write freely.

However, if you don’t abide the basic rules, this thread will disappear.

Previous thread: http: // ******

>> 980 Next thread, please.

561. Nameless Adventurer

[Breaking News] Both Genocider and Absolutely Inviolable Area are invading other countries while bringing an army with them.

562. Nameless Adventurer

For real…?

563. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, they apparently founded their own countries, so the people in charge are mostly figureheads that they can control as they see fit.

564. Nameless Adventurer

Ah, that makes sense… In normal situations, you'd need to do a miracle to get a country to lend you their army in the middle of a kidnapping war, but… When they own the country, I guess it's actually trivial to do so.

565. Nameless Adventurer

Not to mention that they probably have no clue on how to manage an army, so they basically need to order the general around and let the general find a way of executing the commands in a sensible manner.

566. Nameless Adventurer

Two crazy people for sure…

567. Nameless Adventurer

And the princess of Absolutely Inviolable Area's country just made a speech.

568. Nameless Adventurer

Never saw that princess before… Guess it’s because she’s from a small country, so it can’t be helped.

569. Nameless Adventurer

Actually, I feel like I did see her before…

570. Nameless Adventurer

Huh? When?

571. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, in the Beginners’ City, but… I’m pretty sure it was a player though.

572. Nameless Adventurer

Maybe they’re just really similar?

573. Nameless Adventurer

Maybe… Or maybe something troublesome is happening.

574. Nameless Adventurer

Like a player impersonating an NPC!? Lol!

575. Nameless Adventurer

That would be hilarious.

576. Nameless Adventurer

Though I can’t really imagine that weird player acting like a cute princess…

577. Nameless Adventurer

Lol!

578. Nameless Adventurer

Well, some people are good at flicking a personality switch when they need to?

579. Nameless Adventurer

I'm surprised you're all seriously discussing the conspiracy theory of a player acting as a princess.

580. Nameless Adventurer

I know, right!?

581. Nameless Adventurer

Crazy people are everywhere.

582. Nameless Adventurer

Well, it's funny to overthink those things.

583. Nameless Adventurer

Just an average day on these forums, I suppose.

584. Nameless Adventurer

We get used to those things after a while! xD

585. Nameless Adventurer

Would KSO even allow people to pretend to be NPCs?

586. Nameless Adventurer

> 585

Well, it is KSO we're talking about…

587. Nameless Adventurer

Lol

588. Nameless Adventurer

And when we consider what the management is like, then… Well…

589. Boss

Hello?

590. Nameless Adventurer

Oh!

591. Nameless Adventurer

I said nothing!

592. Nameless Adventurer

We were just talking about how much we love KSO!

593. Secretary

> 589

Don’t go causing trouble…

594. Boss

Sorry…

595. Nameless Adventurer

The evil is gone!

596. Nameless Adventurer

We defeated it!

597. Nameless Adventurer

Lol!

Chapter 196 – Official Bulletin Board – seventeen

[It’s Going Fast] Second Event Thread 23 [Hell On Earth]

1. Nameless Adventurer

This is a general chat thread.

Let’s write freely.

However, if you don’t abide the basic rules, this thread will disappear.

Previous thread: http: // ******

>> 980 Next thread, please.

785. Nameless Adventurer

I’m dead!

786. Nameless Adventurer

My country is gone!

787. Nameless Adventurer

Aren’t countries getting destroyed way too fast…?

788. Nameless Adventurer

I mean, when we consider that the Genocider took over the Beginners' City near the start of the game, I guess it can't be helped that the top players can quickly take out countries now.

789. Nameless Adventurer

Still way too fast though!

790. Nameless Adventurer

Genocider is way too crazy, after all.

791. Nameless Adventurer

She definitely doesn't think like a normal person…

792. Nameless Adventurer

Ah…

793. Nameless Adventurer

Ah…

794. Nameless Adventurer

I wanna capture the Genocider somehow…

795. Nameless Adventurer

Ah…

796. Nameless Adventurer

What happened?

797. Nameless Adventurer

What happened!?

798. Nameless Adventurer

[Breaking News] Hermagne’s capital was just invaded by an aerial group of assailants!

799. Nameless Adventurer

Huh!?

800. Nameless Adventurer

What the!?

801. Nameless Adventurer

How are we getting an aerial attack in a medi-fantasy game…?

802. Nameless Adventurer

Did someone somehow make an airplane?

803. Nameless Adventurer

This is crazy!

804. Nameless Adventurer

Bluer than indigo… ((See Translator’s Note at the end))

805. Nameless Adventurer

High up in the skies…

806. Nameless Adventurer

In an instant they all blow up…

807. Nameless Adventurer

A hundred thousand…

808. Nameless Adventurer

Pure white roses…

809. Nameless Adventurer

Achoo!

810. Nameless Adventurer

In a beautiful floral pattern…

811. Nameless Adventurer

> 809

You ruined it…

812. Nameless Adventurer

Don’t sneeze in the middle of it! Lol!

813. Nameless Adventurer

Should we sing an old song or sneeze, such a hard decision! Lololol!

814. Nameless Adventurer

Definitely sneeze! Lololol!

815. Nameless Adventurer

Hermagne’s capital became a mess while you all were singing…

816. Nameless Adventurer

And to think we first thought that war in KSO would involve cavalry battles… We’re now seeing an aerial strike.

817. Nameless Adventurer

Oh, and the attackers all seem to be assassins, by the way.

818. Nameless Adventurer

Hermagne might be destroyed for good this time around…

819. Nameless Adventurer

Fire is rising everywhere, it looks like Hell on Earth over here.

820. Nameless Adventurer

They’re really burning the capital down?

821. Nameless Adventurer

As expected of the Genocider! Lol!

822. Nameless Adventurer

Way too merciless! Lol!

823. Nameless Adventurer

Well, I guess bombing the capital felt like a nice way of doing the last big attack in the event for her?

824. Nameless Adventurer

Stop! Hermagne is too close to its death by now!

825. Nameless Adventurer

Just what is this madness…?

826. Nameless Adventurer

I guess she wanted to mess Hermagne up badly enough to the point it can’t compete with the Empire anymore…

827. Nameless Adventurer

Oh, don't worry, Absolutely Inviolable Area is making sure that the Empire is as devastated as Hermagne.

828. Nameless Adventurer

Well, they're big countries, so they can create whatever mess they want without worrying about wiping them off the map!

829. Nameless Adventurer

Too horrifying! Lol!

830. Nameless Adventurer

Small countries are crushed like ants, big countries are used as punching bags… Goodness.

831. Nameless Adventurer

What a mess…

832. Nameless Adventurer

I'm curious about what the power balance will be like between the remaining countries once the event ends…

833. Nameless Adventurer

Well, Hermagne and the Empire will probably survive somehow. I don't think there is enough time left in the event to wipe those two out for good.

834. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, pretty much this.

835. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah… They'll survive somehow.

836. Nameless Adventurer

Though I worry about the nightmare that will follow once the countries owned by Absolutely Inviolable Area and by the Genocide end up becoming major powers…

837. Nameless Adventurer

We should immediately set up a siege against the Wallace Kingdom and the Duchy of Carmelia!

838. Nameless Adventurer

As if any country can lend us the forces to lay a siege against those superpowers!

839. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, our best hopes would be to get help from Hermagne or from the Empire, but they're currently being used as punching bags, so…

840. Nameless Adventurer

If only we had one of them to rely on!

841. Nameless Adventurer

Why did they have to invade at the same time!?

842. Nameless Adventurer

Maybe it was planned…?

843. Nameless Adventurer

Lol! They're too crazy to plan things out! This was just bad luck!

844. Nameless Adventurer

Stop it! The countries are already mostly dead!

845. Nameless Adventurer

Don’t make a punching bag out of the poor countries!

846. Nameless Adventurer

It’s only getting worse, lol!

******

[Way Too Quick] Second Event Thread 31 [Too Many Destroyed Countries]

1. Nameless Adventurer

This is a general chat thread.

Let’s write freely.

However, if you don’t abide the basic rules, this thread will disappear.

Previous thread: http: // ******

>> 980 Next thread, please.

130. Nameless Adventurer

The top players are fighting over Maria in the Beginners’ City now…

131. Nameless Adventurer

Hymn’s Guru VS Yuu!

Ranka VS Perverted Gentleman

That looks pretty exciting!

132. Nameless Adventurer

I pity poor Ranka.

133. Nameless Adventurer

The almost-naked guy fighting a girl who already has to deal with one stupid pervert… That's just sad.

134. Nameless Adventurer

Reported!

135. Nameless Adventurer

I have no idea what Yuu and Hymn's Guru are doing anymore.

136. Nameless Adventurer

Feels like a battle straight out of a buggy demo.

137. Nameless Adventurer

Well, you can kinda understand it if you already know some of Yuu's skills, but… Yeah, it's a weird fight alright. Looks more like a circus presentation than an actual battle.

138. Nameless Adventurer

I'm lost here.

139. Nameless Adventurer

It presents itself as a battle, when it's actually a circus show for the spectators!

140. Nameless Adventurer

Lots of acrobatic movements being done, while Ranka and the Perverted Gentleman fight in the background! Truly a wonderful show!

141. Nameless Adventurer

It’s definitely a circus! Lol!

142. Nameless Adventurer

Hymn’s Guru passes through the ring of fire!

The Perverted Gentleman attacks Ranka!

Hymn’s Guru approaches while dancing through the mud!

Ranka repels the Perverted Gentleman by chanting her Sutras!

Yuu eats some red mushrooms and becomes huge!

Hymn’s Guru jumps on top of his head to make him smaller!

The Perverted Gentleman shines brighter as he poses!

Ranka’s voice goes lower and lower as her disbelief goes higher!

What will actually happen next!?

143. Nameless Adventurer

Lol!

144. Nameless Adventurer

Lol!

145. Nameless Adventurer

Lol!

146. Nameless Adventurer

> 142

You've done a good job. You may rest now.

147. Nameless Adventurer

I've been laughing so hard that I got a stomachache! Lololol!

148. Nameless Adventurer

It's nice to see a good tag team battle with the top players again. Kinda like the Hannes VS Genocider fight in the first event.

149. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, it's good!

150. Nameless Adventurer

I'm still laughing! Lol!

151. Nameless Adventurer

What's happening?

152. Nameless Adventurer

It's just crazy! Lol!

153. Nameless Adventurer

Only the top players are not participating in the wars anymore! Lol!

154. Nameless Adventurer

Well, it's still exciting.

155. Nameless Adventurer

> 154

It’s a different kind of excitement though.

156. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, I mean… I thought I’d be amazed by an epic battle, not by Yuu’s circus show.

157. Nameless Adventurer

They’re great entertainers though! Lololol!

158. Nameless Adventurer

That they are, lol!

159. Nameless Adventurer

I have no clue what Yuu is doing anymore!

160. Nameless Adventurer

I can’t guess the effect of his skills from their names…

161. Nameless Adventurer

I remember what a few of them do, but I think he must have dozens of different skills, so it’s hard to keep track.

162. Nameless Adventurer

I wonder what goes on in his head to pick those crazy skills…

163. Nameless Adventurer

Not only that, but he is actually able to somehow use them effectively in combat… His capabilities are as praise-worthy as his weirdness.

164. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, Yuu is basically playing 5D chess with his skills at this point.

165. Nameless Adventurer

By the way, he mostly focuses on testing stuff to them share detailed information on how they work, doesn't he?

166. Nameless Adventurer

Kinda amazing to see a pure supporter like him holding his own against a fighter like Hymn's Guru…

167. Nameless Adventurer

Guess he isn't just a parasite then, is he!? Lol!

168. Nameless Adventurer

Or rather, if Yuu is a parasite, then what are we, who just make use of the information he shares with us?

169. Nameless Adventurer

Please say no more…

170. Nameless Adventurer

Don't involve us in this mess!

171. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah! The ones talking in the forums while the event is still ongoing totally aren't complete losers!

172. Nameless Adventurer

Eh? Losers?

173. Nameless Adventurer

Well, that’s not wrong, but still… Lol.

174. Nameless Adventurer

I’m no loser, it’s just that my country lost.

175. Nameless Adventurer

A crushing defeat.

176. Nameless Adventurer

Well, better to lose to monsters like the Genocider, than to lose like the poor Holy Imperial Knights.

177. Nameless Adventurer

Didn’t they just lose to the Genocider though?

178. Nameless Adventurer

It was to NPCs actually…

179. Nameless Adventurer

And the fight was… Well, quite sad.

180. Nameless Adventurer

On a side note, I don’t think I’d be able to defeat Alexei even at the current point. I feel like I wouldn’t be able to keep up even though my level rose quite a bit since that time.

181. Nameless Adventurer

Well, the NPCs also had their level raised, so you’d be outleveled regardless.

182. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, the NPC that defeated Sumeragi also received a huge level boost since Alexei's time.

183. Nameless Adventurer

Guess the Important NPCs won't ever become complete pushovers…

184. Nameless Adventurer

How horrible!

185. Nameless Adventurer

Such a mean management team!

186. Nameless Adventurer

Well, what did you expect from KSO's management?

187. Nameless Adventurer

Seeing a bullied boss? Lololol!

188. Nameless Adventurer

That's about right…

189. Nameless Adventurer

Careful, maybe we'll summon the boss again if we keep talking.

190. Nameless Adventurer

Lol!

———

*Translator's Note: Sora no Shimpei (□□□□ which can be loosely translated as "The Divine Sky Soldiers") is a military Japanese song made

during the middle of the second world war. It talks about Japanese soldiers that fall from the sky with parachutes and stuff like that. In post 804-810 (except 809), they're singing parts of the song.

I considered reusing existing translations of the song in those parts, but I didn't like the ones I found, so I made my translation on the spot.

Chapter 197 – Ichijouji Reina's Daily Life – Nine

"G-g-good… m-m-morning." That man's daughter said while I was leaving home to go to school, but I just gave her a quick glance before moving forward.

Such a bad start for the day, I wish they didn't try putting me in a bad mood since early in the morning.

"By the way, yesterday's detective show was really fun!" That man's son exclaimed.

"I know, right!? What did you think of the conclusion, Seigi?" That man's daughter replied.

"I always love them, though I wonder how they keep coming up with so many amazing episodes." That man's son commented.

"The author surely is amazing, isn't he?" That man's daughter said.

… Let's try increasing my walking speed. Those two suspicious people following me are making me frustrated.

Also, being this angry ends up making my eyes narrow on their own, limiting my field of vision… I hate when my body doesn't behave on the way I want it to. This feeling really is the worst.

"What did you think about it, sister-in-law?" That man's son asked… It's not with me though, so there is no point in replying, "Maybe you haven't

seen it yet?" He said after a small while of silence.

"Ah! If you don't like that one, then what is your favorite show, sister-in-law?" That man's daughter asked.

I accidentally bumped into a person while trying to turn around the corner of a street, so I gave him a quick bow before I moved away.

"Oh, and the chef's beef stew at home is quite delicious, isn't it?" That man's son commented.

"Yeah, I love it too, though you didn't eat it with us yesterday, sister-in-law. Did you go out to eat? Is there any dish in particular that you prefer?" That man's daughter asked.

It doesn't disappear, it doesn't disappear! That annoying noise just won't disappear! Why can't it go away!? Why are you blowing those annoying sounds into my ear!? What am I supposed to do about a doll that doesn't stop squeaking!? Mom told me nothing about how to deal with those situations! I don't understand it! I don't know what to do! It's so frustrating!

"Hey! Uhn… You okay?" Suddenly, I heard a voice I knew, so I turned towards him.

"Ma… Masaki?" I replied.

"Who else…? Wait, don't tell me that you forgot my name again." He said.

"No… I didn't." I told him.

Guess I wasn't paying enough attention to my surroundings, so I didn't even notice that Masaki was close… That's not like me, it's too dangerous to walk while being this careless. I'll have to reflect on that.

"Who are those two behind you?" He asked me.

"… Unrelated people." I replied.

"… Ah." Was all that he said in response.

His face was troubled, but I'd prefer if he didn't keep on looking back and forth between me and them… Also, his house was somewhat close to the school if I recall correctly, so this might be a good thing. Those two people won't be able to follow me all the way to school, after all.

"By the way, did you know that KSO gives free equipment to poor people in order to let them play the game?" Masaki suddenly asked me.

"No, I didn't know that…" I replied.

"Apparently they can even get paid if they get good results while gaming, but they also need to keep a high karma to do so." Masaki said.

I can't say I'm particularly interested on why the company does that, but I guess I'll be content with the fact that Masaki changed the topic to something else.

"So well, if you do a good enough job, you might earn enough money to get a stable income out of gaming." Masaki explained.

"Is that so…?" I replied vaguely.

"Yeah, apparently it's an initiative made to get behavioral samples from not only the wealthy, but from the poor too." Masaki said.

Ah, right, there was something about how the game was made in a way that would allow management to watch human behavior in a closed environment that didn't affect reality. As this would allow far greater freedom to each individual player…

I don't quite get the purpose of it, but I don't think it's very relevant either way.

"By the way, your house is funding KSO, isn't it? Do you know why?" Masaki asked me.

"We are…? Well, I don't know what goes on in that man's head." I replied honestly. Why would the minister of finance invest in an online game anyways?

“Ah! Dad said he’s been interested in games lately!” That man’s daughter exclaimed.

“Eh? Uhn… Are you siblings?” Masaki asked me.

“Wrong.” I instantly replied.

“I see…” He said.

I really don’t want him to think I’m siblings with those two, but… Well, they’ve been a bit useful just now, I suppose. I wouldn’t have known that that man was interested in games otherwise.

Though why? Personal interest? An investment? It just doesn’t seem that worth it as an investment though…

“Uhn… Re-Re-Re… I-Ichijou-” Masaki was trying to say something, but he was stuttering a lot.

“Reina is fine.” I told him.

“Then, Re-Re-Reina…” Masaki was still stuttering…

“What is it?” I asked.

“Uhn… What did you eat for dinner yesterday?” He asked.

“Beef stew. Why the sudden question?” I asked him as Masaki changed topics once more.

“I was just curious about what kind of food you usually eat… Did you like it?” He asked.

“Yes, it was quite tasty.” I replied.

“I see… How did you two feel about it?” He then asked the two annoyances behind me.

“Eh!? Uhn… Very delicious!” That man’s son exclaimed.

“Yeah! Absolutely! I was wondering why our sister-in-law hadn’t eaten it with us!” That man’s daughter exclaimed.

“Eh? You didn’t eat it together?” Masaki asked me… Yes, the food was good, but still…

“Oh, hey, Masaki!” One of his party members… I mean… One of his friends suddenly called out to us.

“Oh, hey, come join us!” Masaki exclaimed, then his usual friends all joined us and Masaki introduced those two annoyances to his friends, but in a low tone, so I couldn’t hear what exactly he was saying… Why bother with doing that?

“Oh, right! The other day, this woman just went and killed me even though we were supposed to be allies in the event!” Masaki exclaimed.

“Well… That’s Reina for you.” One of his friends commented.

As they had this kind of conversation, they were also whispering something among themselves while pushing me to the front of the group. I’m not sure if this is because they want to exclude me, but I suppose it’s fine even if they do want to.

“Ah, Reina!” Suddenly, Mai exclaimed that.

“Oh, Mai and Yuuki.” I said as I saw them both. They instantly joined our group immediately after that.

Since we’ve found them too, I suppose we should be pretty close to school by now… It will be okay, right? The topics we’ve been talking about have been ‘normal’, right?

“Today will be a good day! Let’s talk a lot, Reina!” Mai exclaimed.

“Yeah, like about how that ice spear-” Yuuki started saying, but Mai grabbed his neck, “Sorry! Sorry!” as usual, his choice of topic wasn’t ideal.

“By the way, you’re surely getting along well with them, aren’t you?” Mai asked me while pointing towards Masaki’s group.

“Well, it’s only Masaki that can talk to her easily while still butting heads all the time…” One of his friends commented.

“We don’t get along that well…” Masaki said.

“Yes yes, of course you don’t, just be careful on your next fight with her, alright?” His friend said.

“Ah, I guess…?” Masaki replied.

“Sorry that she causes so much trouble.” Yuuki for some reason said.

“By the way, Reina, the crepe store in front of the station is reopening today, so how about going together?” Masaki suddenly asked me.

Oh yes, Mai did tell me about this one, but… “Why ask me?” I asked him.

“… Consider it a way to make up for the end of the last event.” Masaki replied.

“Ah… Alright, I’ll go.” I told him. I was a bit surprised to be invited like this, but I suppose it’s fine.

“Then let’s go after school! Together!” Mai suddenly exclaimed.

“Ah, sure…” Yuuki commented.

“We’ll have a fun time eating crepes together, Reina.” Mai giggled for some reason as she said that.

“I wonder if I have money for crepes with me though…” I muttered to myself.

And like this, we were able to walk the path to school without me needing to worry about the two annoyances that had been left behind.

Chapter 198 – Ichijouji Reina's Daily Life – Ten

Today's history lessons were as boring as usual. The teacher was explaining the background of the political and religious conflicts that led to the third world war, things like how the discrimination of some minorities ended up leading to lots of internal conflicts… Same stuff that I had already learned at home long ago.

The teacher also just followed the textbook without really trying to add anything particularly interesting to the lesson in itself, so it was pretty tiresome… I still had to pay attention though, just in case he decided to ask me something, since I needed to at least know the topic he was talking about.

He ended up asking Mai and someone else today instead though. Mai answered her question correctly, but the other person just gave a half-baked answer.

… At the end of the day though, it was just stuff that I already knew. It really was the kind of class I hoped I didn't have to listen to in the first place, so the bell signaling its end was quite welcome.

Well, hearing about those things that I already knew made me wonder if I could become able to understand 'normal' people better if I started researching more about history of the average person though. Perhaps there could be some societal clues that I could pick up from this kind of knowledge… And if not, I suppose I might still learn some interesting things that I may use to 'play' in KSO.

Never mind that though, let's focus on the more important things. I was invited to go eat crepes with Mai today, after all… Except I brought no money with me. Would they accept a credit card? Would be easier on me if they did for sure.

When I asked Mai and Yuuki about it, Yuuki told me that the place was a bit too small, so they didn't have a credit card machine… That was quite troubling.

However, he also offered to lend me some money to let me eat with them today… Was this the 'lending and borrowing' thing that mom told me about? That 'a true friend is one who you can repeatedly lend and borrow from without worries, one who you can trust and that has built up their credibility with you'?

In that case, I guess it should be safe to consider Yuuki a friend, right? And since I'm borrowing this time, then, after paying him back, I should probably lend in the next one?

What would be a good thing to lend him though? I don't really know what boys my age like, so… I guess I should ask Mai? She's been sitting on her chair, looking absent-mindedly through the window for some reason… She's also pretending to look at her textbook from time to time, and occasionally glancing my way.

Is she perhaps busy? Or does she actually have too much time on her hands and doesn't really know what to do with it? I'm unsure… Should I ask her about it now? Or should I ask later…?

I suppose it's not an urgent matter, so I can ask her later.

In any case, today's crepe was quite delicious, so I'd like to come here again in the future, if possible.

Chapter 199 – Ichijouji Naoshi's Daily Life – Two

(Ichijouji Naoshi's (Reina's father) PoV)

Today, the congress rejected my bill. I expected it to happen, but I was still disappointed in it. This bill was necessary to make sure our country would be in a solid position a hundred years from now, and we are not going to completely recover from the aftermaths of the fourth World War otherwise.

However, the people here are still unable to look at the long-term future of this country, they can only stare at the immediate impact it would take in their own lives and refuse to acknowledge the necessity of smaller sacrifices for the sake of a prosperous future.

… It is a bit of a relief that at least 129 people out of the 450 members of the congress did realize the need for this bill though. It failed, but I can at least have some hope for the future if there are some members that can see what is necessary.

For now though, I suppose I should focus on the short-term profits. The more I earn, the more credibility I'll have, and so I'll be able to convince more of the necessity of following through with my plans.

Well, that, and to keep gathering more data. The more data I have, the less arguments will my opponents have when going against me.

And as I was thinking of that while Yamamoto, my butler, drove me home, I got a message on my phone, 'Nao, look at this photo! When Shii fell

asleep, I put on her glasses! It looks great, doesn't it!?

'… You're not going to get angry at this, right?'

I sighed at this stupid message and sent a reply, 'Don't contact me for pointless matters.'

A few seconds later, I received another message, 'Ah, sorry! But there was something else!

'Can you increase our funding? We have gotten quite a bit of data, but some players are causing a few too many unexpected events, which is putting too much strain on our servers. I want to increase the number of servers, but the current budget isn't enough for it!'

That's not the attitude someone should take when begging for money… I rubbed my eyebrows and sent a reply, 'Tell me how much you need, I'll make a deposit.' though I'll also tell Shiori about it just in case.

I'm unsure as to why unexpected events are making them need more server space, but they are the ones who understand about game design, so it's best to just give them the money and let them do whatever they want.

And then, I got another reply, 'Seriously!? Thank you! I love you Nao! I could even kiss you for this!

'Wait, were you actually aiming for this all along!? I didn't realize Nao felt this way… Uhn… Please be gentle?'

… Let's just send the entire message log to Shiori and let her deal with Yuushirou.

And then he started calling me… Let's ignore that. It's been quite some time since someone other than that girl has been able to get me angry, but this guy certainly has an amazing capability of getting on my nerves… But that's no good. I need to stay calm. Always.

But then, my butler picked up a call, "Yes? I see… You want to talk to the master? He is at the backseat though…" Yamamoto then asked me, "Should

I put it on speaker mode?”

So he calls my butler when I don’t pick up my phone…? I sighed, then gave permission to Yamamoto.

“Hey, Nao! How are you doing!?” I gave no reply to the excessively loud greeting, “Come on, it’s Yuu!”

“Cut it out.” I told him bluntly.

“Sorry, sorry! I was just messing around!” As I heard that, I considered asking Yamamoto to end the call, but I decided to listen in case there was something relevant coming, “Anyways, thanks for the additional funding! I’m really grateful!”

“So…?” I asked, hoping he’d get to whatever was the reason for the call, so that I could stop hearing his voice already.

“Goodness, that’s why children don’t like you, you know-?

“Wait!? Shii!? Stop that!” Yuushirou then started screaming, possibly in pain.

“Nao explained everything to me.” Shiori told Yuushirou.

“What?! I was betrayed!” And then Yuushirou started screaming more.

“I’m terribly sorry for the inconvenience. I’ll properly educate this piece of garbage now.” As Shiori said this, the call was cut off.

Well, this was worthless, but at least I can rejoice a bit on the fact that Shiori is taking care of him… Not that this has ever done anything to change his behavior though.

“… They were as lively as ever.” Yamamoto commented.

“I suppose that’s a kind way of putting it.” I replied.

Nonetheless, Yuushirou's horrible personality aside, those two are fantastic workers, and their research has been quite useful so far. The recent data they obtained was enough to take down at least two of my political opponents after all.

Of course, defeating two people isn't enough to reach my goals, but it's a step in the right direction, so… Let's keep on funding them, so that they can get me even more data.

And of course, let's take care of the fools that were caught in my honeytrap.

Chapter 200 – Unfortunately, she's the queen

(Eren's PoV)

"Boss, I mean, milord, this is the post-war report." One of my subordinates submitted a pile of documents to me.

I sighed. That damned woman messed everything up so badly, I can't even imagine how much damage she caused this time around.

Also, "It's not boss nor milord. It's 'your majesty' now." I told my subordinate as I started reading the documents.

"I'm sorry, your majesty!" That subordinate exclaimed.

"Ah, boss…" My right-hand man said.

"It's 'your majesty'…" I told him.

"Well, your majesty…" He started saying.

In the meantime, I threw a knife towards a prisoner that was trying to sneak outside, but that I could easily see through the window, then went back to reading as the person started screaming in pain as the knife hit their ankle.

Also, that damned woman kidnapped Hermagne's princess again, didn't she? Though this time she apparently isn't a prisoner? Why does she keeps bringing me more trouble? I'd rather just throw this princess away and not deal with her, but that woman will surely kill me if I do…

Seriously, why do migrants have to be so troublesome? It's pointless to try holding hostages or to try threatening them, since they aren't from here anyways… And well, killing them is useless as they will just revive right away. Why did the gods seriously think it was a good idea to invite those crazy people here?

"What do we do with those guys?" My subordinated asked me while pointing towards the people that were trying to escape.

"I guess I'll torture them later to relax. Put them in a cell or something in the meantime?

"Wait, what do you mean with 'those guys'? Wasn't there only one?" I asked.

"Well, there were two, and you hit one." My subordinate explained.

"Really now…? I must be getting rusty then." I replied. If only I didn't have to do this much office work, I bet I would have noticed them two…

"Hey, boss…" My right-hand man said.

Well, at least I could get some action during that crazy war. Being able to properly fight and use traps after so long surely felt nice.

"Seriously though, that damned woman just keeps causing me trouble…" I said to no one in particular.

"Boss…" My right-hand man said again.

That woman always causes trouble whenever she appears… And now I'm even a king because of her! Why!? I don't get it at all!

"My my, is something the matter?" I heard a voice that I really didn't want to hear.

"If it isn't the one that is the matter…" I replied to the crazy woman.

"I see… Is your head still not okay?" She asked me.

The definition of lack of common sense right in front of my eyes… The one person that I can't kill in order to solve the problems that she causes me… Can you at least bring the princess back to Hermagne to take one burden out of my back, please?

"It's hard to be okay when I have this much on my plate. Can't you think about my feelings a bit?" I asked that crazy woman… She snickered, "Damn you."

"Boss!?" My right-hand man exclaimed.

I looked through the window and into the bright blue-sky, refusing to face their astonished expressions… At the end of the day, it won't make much difference if she gets rid of me, or keeps me as her puppet now, won't it?

"I see… Can't say I understand it, but you're having quite the hard time, aren't you?" That woman asked.

"Yeah! That damned person is driving me crazy!" I exclaimed.

Because she somehow doesn't even realize that she is the source of all my problems… Damn you! Why can't you have at least a small bit of self-awareness!?

Well, I guess I can at least rant to my heart's content to her, since she doesn't even realize I'm complaining about her, so she won't kill me for that… "Seriously, that crazy person is absolutely nuts. There's nobody that gets me as tired as them…" I said.

"Eh!?" My subordinates exclaimed.

"Seems like you're having a pretty rough time." That woman commented… Yeah, because of you! "Oh, and by the way, I met those two outside, do you happen to know them?"

She then showed me two prisoners. One that I hit with my knife, and another that was probably the one I didn't notice.

One of them tried saying something, but I couldn't understand it. It was probably a different language, "I have no idea what you just said." I told him.

"Ah, I think they're from the northern part of the continent." That woman said… You were the one that brought them here, but you're unsure?

Well, her confused expression was surprisingly cute, but I'm not saying that out loud, since I don't wanna die for something this silly.

"How troublesome. Even if I learn the language skill, its description says that I won't be able to understand it immediately after acquiring it…" That woman commented.

"Yeah, you gotta learn the language slowly instead." I replied.

"I suppose so, but… Can you two understand what I'm saying?" She asked the prisoners, who in response, said more things in a language that we can't comprehend.

And because of that, she started breaking their fingers… Yeah, as if they don't know our language. No way nobles from the northern part of the continent won't know the languages used in Hermagne and in the Empire. It would be suicidal to not learn the languages of the nearby major powers.

The prisoners started screaming in pain, but refused to say anything in our language though… They must really be underestimating that woman, "Even after having all their fingers broken, they refuse to understand us… How troublesome." She commented.

"Want me to lend you a torturer?" I asked her.

"No need, I think this is a good opportunity to experiment a bit with what Hanako and Takeo can do with human hosts." As that woman said that, she summoned some two insect-like monsters.

… She had such a pure expression as she said such terrifying words…

"W-wait! Stop! I talk to king!" One of the prisoners explained.

“Yes! We talk! Please save we!” The other begged me.

“What a pity, they really seem to be unable to talk properly…” That woman commented.

I mean, even if they aren’t fluent in our language, their current grasp seems to be enough to handle negotiations… But I suppose she doesn’t care at this point.

“Please help! Beg king for help!” One of them exclaimed.

“We talk! No insects please!” The other shouted.

I pity them, but… “I’m sorry, but I can’t help you.”

“Why not!? You king!” One of them desperately asked.

“Because unfortunately… She’s the queen.” Then, I turned my chair around and looked outside the window… I hope she can at least do her experiments in some other room.

Chapter 201 – Divide and Rule

<Your Karma dropped significantly>

<New Torture Skills acquired>

<New Interrogation Skills acquired>

<New Training Skills acquired>

<New Breeding Skills acquired>

<Level of your Observation Skills has increased>

<Level of your Detection Skills has increased>

<New Title: Torturer>

<New Title: Cruel>

<New Title: Lord of the Flies>

<New Title: Lord of the Insects>

My test subjects had parts of their flesh expand into unusually large protrusions, until they eventually exploded, making a large number of maggots fall from it… However, all maggots instantly died the moment they hit the ground, as the fall damage led their HP to 0… This is kinda useless, isn't it?

Also, the HP of the test subjects is nearing 0 as well, so they shouldn't be able to let Hanako and Takeo give birth to children much longer… Ah, one of them died even. What a waste.

And the next one… Oh, its brain exploded? That was unexpected. And an insect child came out of the exploded brain too.

Also, this one seems to be bigger than the last ones… And quite obedient as well? Perhaps because the parents are already my servants, so it was born as a servant already.

Let's see… A child of Hanako and Takeo… I guess you'll be Tarou.

——

Name: Tarou

Race: Insect Prince Lv. 1

Status: Parasitic

Skills:

<Dominate Lv. 1>; <Night Vision Lv. 1>; <Infrared Vision Lv. 1>; <Heat Sense Lv. 1>; <Medicine Enhancement Lv. 1>; <Follower Enhancement Lv. 1>; <Immunity To Harmful Mental Effects>; <Mind's Eye Lv. 1>; <Infuse Poison Lv. 1>; <Blood Eater Lv. 10>; <Soul Eater Lv. 17>; <Sticky Thread Creation Lv. 1>; <Learn Lv. 1>; <Observation Lv. 1>; <Detection Lv. 1>; <Poison Magic Lv. 1>; <Dark Magic Lv. 1>; <Water Magic Lv. 1>; <Insect Magic Lv. 1>; <Dark Resistance Lv. 5>; <Water Resistance Lv. 5>; <Poison Immunity>; <Weather Prediction Lv. 5>; <Always Hungry>; <Eats Anything>; <Loves Eating>

Titles:

Rena's Servant: Proof that one became Rena's servant. Increases the effect of enhancements provided by its master <Small>.

Cannibal: Proof that one eats others of their race. Increases Attack Power against those of its race <Small>; Fear Aura against those of its race <Small>.

Blood Eater: Proof that one drinks the blood of others of its own race. Increases Attack Power against those of its race <Medium>; Fear Aura against those of its race <Medium; Temporarily increases statuses after eating those of its race <Medium>.

Insect Prince: One born from noble parents, sucking the soul of its own kind while they were still in their eggs, and by the hands of a being whose karma is below –400. By learning from its master's actions, the prince became a parasite and tyrant. Increases the effects of skills related to insects <Large>; Increases the status of its own kind <Medium>; Increases the growth rate of skills <Small>.

———

Oh my… Isn't this a rare servant that can only be obtained by trying to generate multiple servants in a very specific scenario? Seems like I was quite lucky.

Also, it seems to get stronger by feeding on blood and souls, so I guess I should try letting it absorb plenty.

"Is it finally over…?" Eren asked me, now that the noises ceased.

"Oh, yes, it is… Do you need something, by the way?" I asked him, who seemed to be a bit pale… Maybe he is bad with insects?

"Aren't you the one who needs something? You came here all the way here, after all." He asked me back.

"Oh, right!" I had forgotten all about it because I was distracted by the fun experiments… Well, never mind that, "I just wanted to ask about the current state of things in the kingdom."

“Well… You acquired way too much territory in a very short amount of time. We don’t have enough resources nor manpower to maintain all this.” He explained.

“I see…” I was at first only planning on expanding through some of the nearby small nations, but I guess I might have overdone it. Even if we get some solid amount of resources by getting ransom from the nobles we kidnapped from Hermagne, we’ll still be lacking the manpower.

After thinking for a small bit, I gave him an answer, “Let’s just make an oppressive prejudiced tyranny then.”

“… Each word that comes out of you migrants’ mouth scares me.” Eren replied.

I then decided to give him a more in-depth explanation, “It’s simple. We start oppressing people based on what deities they worship, while making sure that the residents of our initial territories end up being the ones with the most benefits.

“This will either force them to start converting to worshipping our deities and naturally associating themselves with our kingdom, or allow us to oppress them to our heart’s content without caring for their health or prosperity of their region in the slightest.

“Like this, we’ll be able to a lot of resources from the oppressed regions, and need far less manpower to maintain them since we’re not actively trying to maintain them in the first place. We’ll just be exploiting them instead.

“You can also try oppressing them based on other things, such as skin color, gender, food preferences or anything else you decide. I’ll leave the details to you, so it’s fine if you change some things here and there.”

After a small while of silence, Eren replied, “… Understood, my queen.” I never called myself a queen though? Well, whatever, “Though if I may ask… What are you planning on doing now?”

“Ah, I’m going to pursue one of the escaping prisoners that came from the northern region of this continent.” I replied.

“Wait, there were three of them?” Eren asked.

I didn’t bother with answering this obvious question, so I just asked him, “Do you need anything else?”

“Well… Please don’t start another war, my queen… Our country isn’t capable of enduring yet another major conflict after this one just ended.” He explained.

“Ah, sure, that’s fine.” I wasn’t planning on ‘playing’ war again anyways. It’s fun, but it also gets tiring after a while, so I wanted to try something different next.

For now, I’m interested on seeing what it will be like on the north. It must be fun to try going to a country where most people can’t speak your language.

“Then, I’m going now.” I told him.

“Take your time outside!” Eren enthusiastically replied.

Now, to follow the thread left behind by the runaway prisoner!

Chapter 202 – The Refuge at the Border

After a while of chasing the prisoner that had escaped, I eventually arrived at some mountains. This was mostly unexplored territory, as most players were still only on the Western portion of the continent, so I'm looking forward to seeing what the Northern portion has to offer. It will probably have considerably stronger mobs and NPCs since it's a newly opened area at the very least.

I also didn't have much information of the region on my map, so I wasn't even sure where I needed to go, but… Well, my thread was at least guiding me towards the person who escaped.

Eventually, I ended up finding a house in the middle of the mountains. It was still within the territory of the Wallace Kingdom, but I certainly did not know it existed… Did they end up making a base within my own territory? Now that's quite bold of them.

I used <Stealth>, <Silent Move> and <Hearing>, then got on top of the house and started eavesdropping on what they might be speaking about… However, it was all in a different language, so I couldn't understand anything.

How bothersome, I even acquired the appropriate language skill, but I still can't get what they say… I guess it can't be helped. The skill should naturally level up as I listen to more people speak in this language, so for now I'll just have to deal with not understanding anything.

Then, I jumped inside from the window, and quickly incapacitated its inhabitants.

******

After that, while Tarou started eating them up, I started searching the house to see what I could find. At the same time, I was grinding levels of my Language skill as the incapacitated opponents were asking me things like ‘Why!?’ or begging for mercy as they saw their companions being eaten up by Tarou.

Let’s see… There are some documents here that I can’t understand at all, so I guess I’ll send them to Eren, since he might be able to read them if he tries for long enough.

And also… Oh, a map? That’s nice. Even if it’s not very detailed, it’s at least showing me that the Meffy Commercial Nation mostly has small villages, with the only big city being the capital, and only three other settlements being big enough to be called cities.

Yeah, this is good enough alright. I think I’ll go to the nearest city first, to see what it’s like.

However… My servants started complaining. They seem to think it’s a bad idea if I go explore with my usual appearance? I guess it would be a bit too obvious that I’m a foreigner like this, wouldn’t it?

Then let’s use a disguise, I suppose? The house’s wardrobes should have some leftover clothes from the people I killed, so I can use those for a start.

I also figured that using this hair that mom gave me would also be no good, so I tampered with the settings a bit to let it grow. It’s a good thing that the game allows us to easily change our hair’s style and length as we see fit.

What else… I won’t be wearing armor nor a cloak while disguised, so I won’t be able to bring Inoue and Azabu with me… That would be no good.

Oh, got it. “Inoue, you possess Alexei’s armor, and then wear my cloak with Azabu possessing it.” I ordered them. They were a bit disheartened, but it couldn’t be helped.

Besides, Azabu is a living armor anyways, so he can pretend to be a mute escort or something… Though I wonder if he’d be able to start speaking if I taught him some language skills… Well, let’s ask Yuu about it later.

And the rest of my familiars are much easier to hide, so I don’t have to worry about how to bring them with me.

As for the finishing touch… I guess I’ll change my hair into a ponytail, just to change the looks a bit more. This should be good enough, so let’s go!

Chapter 203 – The Mysterious Girl

(Abby's PoV (New character))

Today, I decided to travel to a nearby city in incognito. My title of princess may be just for show, but I still like to check up on our cities to make sure everything is alright.

It's something I've been doing for quite some time now, so I was pretty used to it… However, this time, there seemed to be a pretty unusual person lined up right behind me on a stall to buy sweets.

She poked my shoulder with her finger, but when I asked her, "Is something the matter?" she just tilted her head in response… Strange. This girl seems to be about my age, and she is definitely no commoner. Her manners are too elegant for that.

Is she a foreign noble then? I suppose that might be it… Well, let's give her one of the sweets from the stall as a way of starting the conversation, "Here you are." I told her as I gave her the candy I had just bought.

"T-tank… U?" She replied.

"Eh? You can't speak our language?" I asked her just in case, but she just tilted her head in response.

Way too strange. A foreign noble who comes here without even being capable of speaking our language?

Also, her clothes don't really fit her. The sizes are wrong… Too suspicious, I need to investigate more.

“Can you tell me if something is the matter?” I tried asking her in a different language, but she still did not seem to understand.

Also, her escort knight seemed to be getting nervous for some reason…

“Did you come here on a trip?” I decided to ask with the language of the Western portion of the continent.

“Oh! You can speak our language?” She replied in the same language I just used.

So she’s from the place that the migrants descended upon with the blessings of the gods? That one place that has had a wide number of horrible violent occurrences happen one after the other?

This might be a very dangerous lady then… I need to investigate more.

Wait, why is her knight touching his sword’s hilt!? “Wait, I’m not a dangerous person! It’s only natural that one has to learn multiple languages when living in a country with as few cities as ours! Foreign merchants come to this place way too often, so I needed to learn how to talk to them!” I hurriedly explained… Though it was only a half-truth, since I, as a princess, obviously needed to learn multiple languages. It was not because I needed to handle merchants.

“Calm down, Ino… Sensho.” The lady said, which made the knight let go of his sword.

Inosensho looks like a really strange name, but let’s not mind that and focus on trying to understand why this lady is here, “Quite unusual for you to come here at this time though. I mean… The only remarkable thing happening right now is the election of the next Grand Duke.”

“Grand Duke’s Election?” She asked me… Could she be completely oblivious to it? Or is she just playing dumb, while planning to interfere with it…?

Let's give her a superficial explanation. It's best to avoid antagonizing her without need, "Well, you know, it's the person who ends up ruling our kingdom. We elect our ruler who stays in charge for a while, until the next election comes by.

"And well, our king only has one daughter, and as she happens to be of marriable age already, there is a good chance that the next Grand Duke might end up becoming her fiance, making this year's election a pretty special one."

"I see, so this is essentially a constitutional monarchy?" She commented.

I wonder… Is this lady the problem person? Or is the silent knight the actual problem? Which one should I be more worried about? Is she just covering for him while he analyses our defenses?

I can't let her roam around freely… Better keep her close, where I can watch her movements, "Hey, would you like me to show you around the city?" I asked her.

"Would that be alright? How much do you want for it?" She asked me. Oh, right, it would make sense that I'd ask for something to guide her around…

"Well, how about this much? I'll keep it cheap for you." I replied.

I may just be a powerless princess, but I do love this country. There's no way I can do nothing after finding someone that might be plotting something against us, "I'm Abby, by the way, nice to meet you." I told her.

"Oh, I'm… Reiko." She replied.

"Reiko? Such an unusual name!" I said.

"Well, it's a bit old-fashioned…" She replied.

Okay, I got the role of guide. I will have to somehow keep those two in check, but… At times like this I really wish I had power to move some knights around to help me.

I could try asking Dirk for help, but… It's better if he focuses entirely on the election. I'll somehow handle this myself.

However… I think it might be a bit too dangerous for me to directly involve myself like this without any plan whatsoever. I need some time to think on what will be the best course of action, "Ah! I just remembered that I need to go home early today! Sorry!

"Do you mind if I show you around tomorrow? We can try meeting up a bit before noon at the city's square."

It's dangerous to leave them alone for a while, but this is probably the safest course of action. Luckily enough, right now they just seem to be scouting, as this lady probably wouldn't have tried talking to me at the stall in the way she did otherwise, so, hopefully, no damage will be caused during the time we're apart.

"Understood." The girl replied… Alright! Mission accomplished!

I'm not going to let you get in Dirk's way!

******

(Rena's PoV)

"Seems like we got a nice interpreter and hostage for ourselves." I commented to Inoue once we parted ways with Abby.

———

Translator's Note: As a reminder, Reiko is the name of Reina's mom, who has already passed away.

Chapter 204 – Fastria Agricultural City Tour

(Abby's PoV)

After waiting for small while at the city's square, I eventually heard the words, "Sorry to keep you waiting." come out from yesterday's lady's mouth, as she arrived together with her escort knight.

… They sure do stand out quite a bit, but I suppose that can't be helped.

I'll be sure to protect my homeland from those outsiders that might be threatening it!

"Oh, I didn't wait long! Anyways, is there a place you want to go to?" I asked the lady.

"Well, I guess I'd like to learn a bit more about the city as a whole?" She requested.

A generic explanation? I suppose there shouldn't be any problems in giving something like this to her… I also glanced at the knight behind her to see if I could get anything out of him, but he showed no reaction at all… I can't help worrying about what their purpose here is.

Guess there is no use worrying about it for now. Let's start walking and showing them around. Hopefully their purpose will become clear from the questions that they ask or what things they pay more attention to, "We're at the Fastria Agricultural City. The region under the charge of this city's ruler

is the backbone of the Meffy Commercial Nation, as the vast majority of the nationally produced food comes from here."

"Oh my, that's pretty impressive." The lady commented.

"That it is! And it's all thanks to the Fastria Company that regulates most of the production in this area!

"In fact, you can actually see their mansion from here. Try looking over there." I then pointed towards the mansion that 'he' lives in… I got a bit happy that I was able to brag a bit about his deeds.

Though of course, they probably already knew this much before coming here, since this is all basic knowledge.

Instead of replying to the simple knowledge I shared on the tour though, the lady turned towards the knight and asked, "What's the matter, Inosensho?"

… I couldn't see the knight's expression at all, so I wondered how she knew that something might have happened… Did someone try picking his pocket or something? Even if this city is great, there is no way to completely stop criminals, so I guess that can't be helped.

Though I can't imagine someone actually being able to steal something from this stern knight…

"I see… You can go, then." As she said that, the knight bowed… Wait, how does she even know that he wants to go somewhere!?

Also… "Is it really okay to separate yourself from him?" I couldn't help asking.

"Yes? Unless it troubles you, of course." She replied.

At this moment, I noticed that the knight actually had a small paper sheet in his hands… Is this some sort of invitation? Was he told to go somewhere else alone…? That seems quite dangerous in the middle of foreign territory… Does this lady have no sense of crisis at all?

“Inosensho, be careful.” She told him, to which he bowed once more. I guess she figured I was fine with it since I gave her no reply.

Then, the knight left us and went somewhere else. I’m worried about this, but perhaps it might be for the best. It might be easier to get information from her without an escort looking over her back, especially if she is as naïve as this last command makes her look like.

“Could you please tell me more about the country?” She then asked me.

“Oh, of course!” I replied.

This was an unexpected turn of events, but let’s do our best! I’ll make full use of this opportunity, so please share all of your secrets with me!

******

(Gillian’s PoV (New Character))

“Huh? You actually came this easily? Surprising.” I commented as the knight approached the open area that me and my subordinates were waiting at. A hard-to-access area that can only be reached through back alleys… Perfect for taking care of nuisances.

Never thought it would be this simple to lure the knight from another country here though. Perhaps this job will be easier than I initially thought.

“Dunno what country you’re from, but our employer isn’t happy about suspicious people approaching the princess, got it?” I told him. Trying to see if it would rile him up a bit. It would be easier to take care of him if he isn’t calm.

However… He didn’t react at all. Let’s try something else then, “Also, that lady you’re protecting… She looks nice, doesn’t she? I might play a bit with her once I’m done with you.” After I said that, he finally pulled out his sword. So she is his weakness? That’s good to know.

My subordinates too unsheathed their weapons, but just as we were about to start… “Lord Gillian…” One of my stupid subordinates said.

I kicked the idiot, “Don’t go telling my name to enemies!”

Seriously, why give away free information like that? We don’t know who else might be listening, so we should conceal as much about ourselves as possible…

I get that he was probably scared of the enemy and wanted me to give some instructions on how to proceed with the battle, but that was not the right way to go about it. I’ll have to re-educate him later.

“Let’s just get this over with.” As I said that, I tried looking at the status of the knight.

——

Name: Ino, Ino… Inononononono???

Race: Dark ====????

Status: ===

Notes:

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======

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… Well, he certainly has a strong concealment magic on him. I could hardly get anything out of it.

“Die!” As I exclaimed that, my subordinates attacked… I wonder how many will die here. I might actually get some nice compensation if I lose too many men.

Chapter 205 – Fastria Agricultural City Tour – part two

(Gillian's PoV)

Another one of my henchmen was blown away by this knight. His movements were not only way too fast for his gigantic body, but they also made his sword so hard to see, that I started wondering if the sword wasn't actually invisible. We also couldn't quite grasp the right distance to fight from, as his range didn't seem to be consistent, somehow.

He is way too strong to be the escort of some traveling young lady. His tackles are breaking my men's bones, and nobody seems able to stop his sword attacks, nor to land a single hit on him even though he is surrounded… How?

I gave a few signals to my subordinates. We need to change tactics… They understood it, and started running around and throwing stones at the knight, aiming to distract him, and block his vision to some extent with rocks aimed at his eyes.

Nonetheless, he is knocking all stones aside with simple arm movements, even though those throws have been empowered by our skills… What is this monster?

One of my men tried making use of the distractions to stab a knife in-between the knight's eyes, but the knight reacted in-time, grabbing my man's head and crushing it with his bare hands… Ridiculous. The hard part of this task should have been dragging the knight here, not killing him after

he is surrounded. How is this even happening? Why is he the one exterminating us and not the other way around!?

A knight as strong as this one should surely have quite the fame behind him, but… Who could it be? Alexei, Ronove, the Imperial Princess… Those famous people have all died one after the other in such a quick succession. There was no big name that reached us in this meantime.

And while I tried understanding our current situation better, the knight kept on killing… Crushing my subordinates as if they were mere ants… And somehow dodging each and every attack that came his way… Who is this monster? I have no information on him.

… Perhaps he is the very person that killed all those famous people from the Western part of the continent? It wouldn't surprise me if he was…

But an opportunity presented itself. Maybe he got distracted, or maybe he got careless due to how easily he overpowered us, but… His back is turned to me. A clear short path between me and him… "You'll regret fighting as recklessly as this!"

As I exclaimed that, I pierced my knife through the back of the knight's neck. Such a clean and direct hit using the 'Fatal Blow' skill… Even this monster should fall to this.

And it fell… It did fall… Its head definitely fell… Its helmet fell on the ground.

But the inside of that armor… It had nothing but pitch-black darkness inside it.

"No way…" I muttered. No blood spewed from the head, the body did not fall even though it was headless, "You are… Already dead?"

The knight ignored me, picked up its helmet, then put it back on top of its own head.

Some of my subordinates panicked at this point, and started attacking it carelessly. With no coordination, with no timing… I could only watch as they accidentally killed their companions in this useless desperate struggle.

I somehow, barely managed to recompose myself enough to send a signal to my few remaining henchmen, telling them to stop those attacks, lest them kill us all.

“Uhn… Surrender! We surrender!” I then exclaimed that, “I’m no priest. I can’t kill someone that is already dead, so I surrender.”

So many died in this pointless battle… Can’t say I cared much for them, but they deserved better than this at least. Nobody told us we were fighting a monster.

However… The knight was walking in my direction. Ominously… Terrifyingly… “I-I apologize for the trouble! I-I’ll give what information you need!” He kept on walking my way, “D-don’t you want to quickly return to your lady!?”

He stopped. This somehow stopped him… I was worried it could get him even angrier, but it instead seemed to calm him down… That was a lucky bet.

“Then, uhn… Well… You want some information on the city, I guess?” I asked him. Hopefully this will be enough for him to let us go in peace.

Chapter 206 – Fastria Agricultural City Tour – part three

(Gillian's PoV)

On the night of the day that we lost to that monster knight, the knight guided us to a private room of an inn.

Inside the room, we found the lady that the knight had been escorting earlier, "So those are the people who will provide us information?" She asked, to which the knight nodded.

After a quick glance towards us, the lady then said, "I guess there must be people like Eren in every city… Well, let's not mind that for now and instead focus on the matter at hand.

"There's someone out there who is aiming for the position of grand duke, and they don't like others mingling with the princess… What should we do about that?

"I also don't really know what that princess' goal is in the first place, so… Well, let's start from the beginning. What's the current situation in this country? Who's your employer? And-"

Wait, isn't she asking too much? I mean, we did lose alright, but I'm not going to simply sell-out my employer just from that. I have a bit of self-respect.

"Hey, woman! You're getting too ahead of yourself!" While I was thinking of how to address her demands, one of my few remaining subordinates

spoke.

“What do you mean?” She asked.

“The one we lost to was the knight, not you! If you want some information, then you better pay for it!” The subordinate said.

… Now that I think about it, this stupid man was one of the people I borrowed from my employer, wasn’t he? He certainly lacks a good head in his shoulder… And also seems to lack loyalty to his own employer as well.

Whatever happens, no loss for me, I suppose.

“Oh, I see… In that case…” As the lady said that, she moved faster than what my eyes could see.

By the time I realized it, she was cleaning up a dagger, and the subordinate’s throat was leaking blood…

“This one can be a host.” As she said those words, some insect came from who knows where and attached itself to the wound on the stupid man’s neck. The man desperately tried to hold his neck, but it only seemed to increase his suffering… It was a nightmarish sight.

“I only need the one with the highest position of you lot, so I’ll thin out any annoying small fries, alright?” She told us.

… And as she said that, that poor subordinate was rolling on the floor, desperately muttering something that I could no longer comprehend.

I see… So this is what true fear feels like. I thought I had understood it when seeing the knight fight, but I guess there is always a bigger monster somewhere.

“So, Gillian, right? I’ll ask you again… Who is your employer?” She asked.

“Gregoir Serdis! Owner of the Serdis Company!” I instantly replied.

I felt a bit hypocritical when I was condemning that stupid subordinate due to lack of loyalty, but… Some people's demands just can't be refused.

Chapter 207 – Fastria Agricultural City Tour – part four

“So, this is Fastria Agricultural City, then this one is Sekandia Industrial City and the last one is the Serdis Financial City.” Gillian said while pointing towards the cities in a map. At the same time, Hanako and Takeo were using the subordinate of Gillian as a host, so that they can produce some offspring that Tarou may consume.

Gillian seemed to be troubled by that, but he continued on with his explanation, “You want to understand the Grand Duke election better, right? The current situation is a bit complicated, and its roots go back to how the current structure of the country was formed.

“Basically, this used to be a monarchy with fairly oppressive rulers in it. The merchants were sick of the excessive taxes, so they started slowly trying to dwindle the power of the royal family by making particularly disadvantageous deals with the royalty, taking some lands to themselves in order to collect debt and many other methods.

“Eventually, the power of the royal family because weak enough, to the point it was possible to make a peaceful revolution, taking the power away from the royal family and putting it into the hands of the people… To some extent.

“There were still some issues with the neighboring countries being wary of this peaceful revolution serving as a trigger to make their own citizens try to take the power away from them, so our merchants had to do a lot of deals to calm down our neighbors.

“Also, while our ruler is decided through the Grand Duke election, in one or another the Grand Duke always had some connection to the royal family… Though well, they tended to be nothing more than a puppet ruler, with the big merchant families, who each control one of the major cities, being the actual rulers of the country.

“But now… Well, with the current king having only one daughter and no other living relatives, it is expected that the Grand Duke will marry the princess, so as to maintain the connection between ruler and royalty, as that was one of the requirements that the neighboring countries wanted in order to not attack us.

“And we have to abide by that, since our military power is low, but… The people currently aiming for the position of Grand Duke are all part of the three big merchant families, so… Whoever ends up getting the position and becoming the ruler of the country, will end up upsetting the balance of power that existed between the three families so far… Which leads to our current mess.

“And to add insult to injury, there are rumors of the princess and the heir to the Fastria Agricultural City, Dirk, being in love with one another, so… Well, there are some worries about what he’ll do to the current structure of the country if he rises to power. Maybe he’ll try giving power back to the royalty or something.

“… Not like the other two are much better though. The guy from Sekondia seems to want to funnel a huge amount of our resources into strengthening the military power… And the one from Serdis seem to want to essentially take control of the whole country to himself, like… By taking away the power of the other families and the like.

“Anyways, that’s the gist of it… So, what do you want to do with our princess now?”

———

Quest No. Extra

World Quest: Political Changes in the Commercial Nation

Commissioner: Gillian

Task: Support one of the factions or usurp the post of Grand Duke

Reward: 5 levels + 5 Million G + ===

Note: World Quests heavily alter the future and, regardless of success or failure, they cannot be taken again.

Do you accept? Yes/No

———

Oh my, it's been quite a while since my last World Quest, hasn't it? Last one was the Krebskulm Liberation Front if memory serves me right… I guess other players must have gotten World Quests in the meanwhile, but I wonder if there was anybody else that got two of them.

Well, let's not mind that and accept the quest.

"Thank you for the concise information." I told Gillian, "Though I still don't know which side will be the most fun one to play with."

I still only have the bare minimum of information after all, but… Well, the princess should show me around the Fastria mansion soon enough, and I should be able to use Gillian to make a connection with the Serdis family, so… Well, that's two that I have an easy connection with?

So, for now, let's work with what we have, "Gillian, translate this message and send it to your employer, G-G-Greg…" I started saying, but I forgot his name already…

"You mean Gregoir Serdis?" Gillian asked.

"Yes, that one. Translate and hand over my letter to this guy." I told him.

"Why me!?" He asked.

“Because I don’t know how to write in your language, but you obviously know how to talk in mine.” I replied.

“Ah, of course…” He replied, then started translating my letter.

Now, what will I do tonight…?

Chapter 208 – A Visit to Sekondia Industrial City's Main Company

Since I had no contacts with the Sekondia Industrial City, I figured it would be best to just travel there directly, so I got Inoue and my other familiars to get back to possessing my gear, then quickly moved to the Sekondia Industrial City.

Right now, I was on top of one of the factories within the city… It felt a bit strange when compared to the other cities in KSO, since this one felt more like what you'd expect from a city shortly after the industrial revolution, not a medi-fantasy city, but… Let's not mind that.

"Do you know where the owner of the Sekondia city is?" I asked Gillian, who I brought here with me.

"I don't know this much." He replied.

"I'll look for him myself then. You can go deliver the letter." I ordered.

"Understood." He heaved a sigh of relief for some reason, then jumped off the roof… I wonder if something was scaring him up here? Well, let's not mind that.

For now, I guess I'll explode this factory to draw some attention, put some poisonous gas in the region to cause further chaos, then go to the nearby mansion to see if I can find the owner inside it.

******

Shortly after the factory blew up, I went to the nearby mansion, cut the throat of a security guard, and used his keys to open the door and get inside.

Then, as I started searching around the rooms within the mansion, I ended up finding the soldiers' dormitory, "Oops, my bad." I said. It's bad manners to look at men who are changing their clothes, after all. Mom would have gotten angry at me if I were to peek at them.

"E-e-enemy attack! Enemy attack!" A flabbergasted soldier exclaimed. It's good to be faithful to one's duties, but it isn't very gentlemanly to keep a conversation going while your pants are down, you know?

"Uhn… I know I'm an intruder, but I'm still a lady, you know?

"… Could it be that you don't even see me as such?" I tilted my head as I asked the half-dressed soldiers.

"Wait, no! Of course, you're a lady! It's just-!" The soldiers started replying.

"Too many openings." I said. The embarrassed soldiers had hurriedly occupied their hands with their clothes, so they couldn't react to my attack, so I quickly cut through them all. They should have gone for their weapons instead.

Well, that's some 20 soldiers taken care of. There are probably more guards than this, but I guess most of them went out to check the explosion, so the mansion is somewhat empty right now.

… Though I wonder why there is a room for soldiers so far back in the mansion. Shouldn't they be stationed much near the entrance? Maybe the chairman's room is nearby? Or perhaps a safe?

Well, it would be nice if it was the chairman's room, as it would save me time… Though a safe with some blueprints for technological innovations could also serve as a nice souvenir for Eren… Not that I know what he likes. Guess I should ask him next time. Maybe he'll rejoice when hearing about my good intentions.

Coming to think of it, I rarely do things for other people's sake, but mom did tell me that many people would be happy if a person did something for them… Maybe I should use this as some ultimate weapon for gaining people's favor then?

Ah, let's think about that later. For now… Oh, nice, Gillian seems to be following my instructions properly. It's a good thing that I let some of Hanako's and Takeo's offspring survive, as they can be very good for surveillance.

Please follow my orders properly, Gillian, or I'll definitely kill you otherwise.

And oh! There we go. A door with a nameplate on its top, saying 'Chairman Room', let's go inside that, and think about what to do to traitors later.

Chapter 209 – A Visit to Sekondia Industrial City's Main Company – part two

(Sekondia's Chairman PoV)

"Would you like a drink?" I asked the invader who entered my room as if it was a completely natural act for her. She was a young lady, probably a noble, probably a noble judging from her mannerisms.

Is she maybe from Serdis…? No, I don't think the people from there would choose such a direct approach… Neither would the people from Fastria. She's probably from a different country.

She didn't reply to my question, so perhaps she doesn't understand the language. I tried asking it again in the Western continent's language.

"Sorry, but I'm a minor, so I can't drink alcohol." She replied.

"Oh, I see?" A minor working as an assassin? Those foreigners have some disgusting tendencies… Well, I can't treat her as a little girl though, she's too dangerous, "I have tea too. Why don't you sit down?" I asked her, then guided her to a table.

"Oh? Sure." She actually agreed to it and sat in front of me.

… I just don't get it. Her mannerisms are clearly those of a noble, yet she is working as an assassin? I could understand it to some extent if she was an orphan that was trained for this kind of duty, but this is not the case at all…

“The moon is quite beautiful tonight.” I mentioned. *

“The moon is no longer beautiful.” She replied.

“Is that so?” I asked.

“It isn’t indeed.” She replied.

The moon isn’t beautiful… Does she have any hidden meaning with those words? Or is she just making random talk? I don’t quite get it.

… Considering how much Chaos she is emanating, it might just be random nonsense. Unless her Chaos has some connection to the moon?

“Never mind that. Why are you inviting an intruder to have tea with you? Are you just trying to buy time?” She asked me.

“No, there is no point in trying to buy time.” I replied honestly.

There were a lot of soldiers stationed on the way to my room, after all. The fact that she even reached this room is enough to know that they cannot help me right now.

Though it’s understandable… This girl is probably an apostle of chaos. There’s no way the soldiers outside would be able to handle someone like this.

“I’m just wondering, isn’t this attack related to the Grand Duke election? In that case, it might interest you to listen to me.” I told her.

“By all means, go ahead.” She replied.

“Well… You know about all the turmoil that happened in the Western portion of the continent, right?

“Of all the things that happened there, the most relevant to us, is how the Wallace Kingdom quickly emerged and rose in power when compared to the other big nations of that portion of the continent.

“As that kingdom borders ours, we will be in great danger if nothing is done about it… The only way we can protect ourselves, is to invest heavily in the military, to make sure we don’t get subjugated by it.

“Of course, there is also the option of trying to pay heavy tributes to the Wallace Kingdom in order to convince them to not attack us, but this would also weaken us considerably, so it’s an option I’d rather not choose.

“So, to make sure our country can remain independent, I’ve been investing a lot on the development of military technology… Take a look at this.” I then took out my newly-developed weapon and showed it to her. It might look just like a toy, but it’s definitely deadly, “Do you understand what I’m getting at?” I asked.

“Ah… You’re inviting me to join you?” She asked back.

“Indeed, and your answer is?” I asked her again.

After a small wait, she replied, “I just can’t see much advantage in siding with you, and your story was quite boring. You talk too much.”

“That’s a shame…” I suppose I just ain’t compatible with those chaos-aligned people.

I felt a bit guilty at killing a little girl, but it couldn’t be helped, so… I pointed the muzzle of my weapon towards her.

———

*Translator’s Note: There is a Japanese Idiom that reads “Isn’t the moon beautiful?” which means “I love you”… The way the author phrased the sentence here was slightly different, so I don’t think he was referencing the idiom in question. I figured I’d mention its existence just in case though.

Chapter 210 – A Visit to Sekondia Industrial City's Main Company – part three

As the man pointed the gun towards me, I pulled the threads entwined in his hand backwards, forcing him to barely miss the shot, even if it still scratched my cheek. He screeched in his mother tongue when I did that, but this was irrelevant.

More important though, that was a pretty accurate gun, wasn't it? Had he not shown it to me in advance before trying to shoot, I probably would have been hit, since I would have had no time to prepare the threads in advance.

"By the way, I'm curious… Were you the one that sent some spies towards my country a small while back?" I decided to ask him.

"Ah… So you were someone I should have tried eliminating from the start." The Sekondia chairman replied.

"A bit too late to realize that." I giggled, "In any case, I'll give you two options.

"Die here and now, or obey my orders."

The important NPC in front of me, Bruce Sekondia, shed a tear when hearing my words, then said, "Just kill me already."

"I see, that's a shame." Then, I put Tarou inside his ear, and let Tarou eat his brain out.

While Tarou had its meal, I picked up the revolver that the chairman dropped… I wonder if guns are effective inside KSO? Or are their damage output too small?

<World Announcement: The player Rena was the first to discover a gun>

<From now on, players will be able to obtain firearms from certain locations, people and quests>

<New Class is now available: Gunner>

<Further details are available at the temples' update bulletin>

… Well, that was a bit unexpected. I guess there are ways to make it effective at the very least.

Also… "Jun, remember the structure of this gun." I figured I'd get him to also become able to become a gun, as this would give him some other function aside from being glasses and a motorcycle.

Well, I'd probably need to get the Gunner class for him to be useful as a gun though… Maybe if I can unlock some fourth of fifth class it would be a viable option?

Oh well, Tarou finished its meal, so let's worry about this later. For now, let's try out the new skill I got from the last event. Its level is low since I obtained it recently, but it doesn't hurt to try, "<Death Magic: Revival>"

Would be nice if I got a zombie puppet that obeyed all of my orders.

And then, I started receiving messages from my acquaintances.

Yuu asked me what did I even do, and asked for more details, and if I was in the Beginners' City.

Maria was impressed by what I did, and was happy for me. She also said she wanted to play together, and that Yuu already started running towards the Beginners' City.

Hannes rudely asked how I got a gun and where was I.

The Perverted Gentleman sent a weird message, but thanked me for unlocking new content… He also asked what would be tougher, his steel body, or steel ammo.

Blossom asked where I was, and said she wanted to catch up with me… I guess she wants to play?

And Jeru… Said he was having a discussion with a friend about which are betters, cats or dogs, and asked for my opinion. He also said that he prefers dogs.

… This last one came a bit out of nowhere, but I suppose I should answer everyone since they're asking.

To Yuu, I told him that I wasn't at the Beginners' City, but at the Northern section of the continent, and that I hoped he could come here in time.

To Maria, I thanked her for the congratulations, and said that I was in the Northern part of the continent, and that I too wanted to play together again.

To Hannes, since he was being rude, I told him that if he wanted to see me so much, then he should just look for me himself.

To the Perverted Gentleman, I told him that I'd appreciate if he didn't come closer before he put on more clothes… And that I believe that it's hard to know which one is tougher, as it depends on what ammo is used and on how thick the steel is.

To Blossom, I told her that I didn't mind playing together with her again, and that I was in the Northern portion of the continent, so she should feel free to come if she wanted to.

To Jeru, I told him that I preferred bears, as cats and dogs die too easily.

Well, this should be enough.

And oh, the undeadification seems to have worked out properly. Nice. Let's then order Bruce, who was kneeling in front of me, to behave similarly to how he did in life for now.

Then, let's leave this mansion. It would have been nice to also turn the soldiers into undeads, but I don't have enough MP for that, so I guess it can't be helped.

Chapter 211 – Dealing with the Serdis Financial City

“Princess, Gregoir apparently wants to meet with you directly. He sent you an invitation.” Gillian told me. I’m unsure why he decided to call me princess, but let’s not mind it.

“Oh, that was a quick response.” I then read up the letter, as it was written in my language. He basically seems to be willing to surrender, but wants me to convince the people supporting him first… Not too bad.

And the place he wants us to meet up at is… A ball? I’m unsure if this is a trap or a real surrender plan, but it’s fine to go either way.

However… The ball will happen three days from now. I won’t be able to get appropriate clothing in this little time… Guess I’ll have to rely on the princess for this. She’ll probably be able to get it done in a day or two.

“Well, who will be your escort for the ball?” Gillian asked me.

“I was planning on just taking Inosensho with me, but I guess I could also take you?” I asked him.

“Please don’t say that. Your knight will kill me if I try taking his place.” Gillian replied.

Well, Inoue did seem to be angry right now… I guess he doesn’t like being referred to by a pseudonym, but he’ll just have to endure it for now.

“Okay, then. I’ll go see my tourist guide now, so I’ll be going. You can tell your boss that I’ll go.” As I said this, I left the building, so as to go meet up with the princess.

******

When I told the princess that I needed a dress, she was a bit suspicious at first, but when I lied to her, saying that I wanted some to take some nice clothes from here before returning home, she happily arranged for me to meet up with a merchant that she trusted.

“Hello, my name is Diin, and I’ll be preparing the clothes for you, young lady.” The merchant that she chose was none other than Dirk Fastria. He might be using a pseudonym and pretending to be just be an average merchant, but it was easy to see through that. I guess he wants to try getting some information from me, “Are there any colors you are particularly fond of, young lady?” He asked me.

“Red and black.” I replied.

“Unusual for a lady, but I’m sure you’ll look great in a red dress.” He told me, “Is there any design in particular that the ladies from your country prefer?”

“Oh, don’t worry about it. I want to bring something that is fashionable at Meffy, for I want to show the good parts of this country to the other ladies of my home.” I replied.

“I see, then how about this one?” He pointed me towards a dress. It was a good thing that, due to we being in a game, all clothes that we buy are automatically to fit our size, so we don’t need to worry about their size or asking a tailor to make adjustments.

It also helps that we don’t even need to try it out on a dressing room, because we always know that it will fit.

But well, I still have some specific needs for my clothing, so… “Please make an adjustment here in order to make it easier to move while wearing

this dress.”

It’s annoying that I’ll need to wear a dress with a deep slit in its leg, but it can’t be helped, as I might need to fight while wearing those party clothes.

“Oh, sure? Is this kind of modification trendy where you live?” He asked me.

“No, just a personal need… Just in case I need to move quickly while my escort protects me in an emergency.” I replied.

“Understood…” Dirk said.

As we did this casual talk, Inoue seemed to be getting annoyed… Well, I guess he doesn’t want the other party to pry on my life, but it can’t be helped that Dirk wants information on me, just like how I want information on him.

“By the way, have your finances gone well, recently? With the sudden price hike of sugar and tea, I imagine it must be rough.” Dirk asked me.

“Oh? The price rose? I leave such miscellaneous dealings to my subordinates, so I wasn’t aware.” I replied.

… Well, I knew that the price had risen, as Belzenstock is one of the main suppliers of sugar and tea leaves to this country, and I asked them to start hiking up the price, but there’s no reason to share this much information. Better to just keep up the act of being a naïve young lady instead.

“Well, it’s fine if it doesn’t affect you. Either way, I’ll send you the finished dress in two days, alright?” Dirk told me.

“Thank you, I appreciate it. Then can we continue the tourism of the city?” I asked the princess.

Before she replied, I noticed that Dirk whispered something to her, but as it was in their language, I couldn’t understand it.

“Of course, where do you want to go today?” The princess asked me.

“Well, how about…” And then, as we left the establishment, we continued sightseeing while I made my plans for the future.

Chapter 211.5 – Valentine's Special

(Mai's PoV)

"Please give me some chocolate!" One of the boys asked.

"I don't have any left!" I exclaimed as I ran from the boys who desperately chased me in order to try getting the chocolates I brought for Valentine's… School rules be damned! I'm running on the hallways and no teacher is going to stop me!

Then, I hid in a corner, and the boys passed through me, not noticing my hiding spot, "Where did Hagiwara go!?" One of them exclaimed.

"She should be nearby! Find her before she reunites with Oda!" Another exclaimed.

… Why is it like this every year!? You should try being kind to the girls you want chocolate from, not pursue them! And why don't you go ask Reina for chocolate instead of me!? She is far more beautiful than me anyways!

… Well, there's no way she'd give some chocolate to a boy just because of some peer pressure though, so I guess it can't be helped that she isn't chased like this.

"Oh, Mai!" Suddenly, a friend of mine, Yuri, exclaimed.

"Ah… It's just you." I heaved a sigh of relief. I was worried the boys might have found me, "Yuri, save me!"

"What's up?" She asked me.

“Some boys are trying to steal my chocolate…” I explained.

“Oh, your chocolate…” Yuri’s eyes shone brightly, “Do you have my share?”

“Ah… Well, just friendship chocolates.” I took out some chocolates that I had bought for myself on a convenience store and gave it to her.

She stared at me for a few seconds before sighing, “Guess he is the only one that gets handmade ones, huh?”

“What the hell do you mean by that!?” I exclaimed.

She giggled, “You’re so easy to understand.” then hugged me, “Well, do your best!” then walked away while waving.

It took me a few seconds to realize what just happened… “Eh…?” She… She abandoned me! This snake left me on my own! Give me back my precious chocolate!

Sighing in defeat, I carefully moved through the school while avoiding the bloodthirsty boys… Until, I saw an unbelievable scene. Reina was giving chocolate to Masaki, who was surrounded by his friends and had a beet red face.

“H-hey! What do you think you’re doing, you crazy woman!?” Masaki exclaimed.

“Eh? Shouldn’t you be telling her about how happy you are right now?” One of his friends asked.

“Shut up, Kenji!” Masaki yelled.

This super embarrassed Masaki was quite contrasting the usual Hannes I see in-game… Could he perchance like Reina?

“Well… This is a day where I’m supposed to give chocolates to the friends I’m indebted to, right?” Reina commented.

Ah… That's just like her, I suppose. What a pure understanding of the holiday she has…

"Well… I guessed it was something like this." Masaki said with a sigh.

"Oh, does your heart ache right now?" His friend asked.

"Shut up, Kenji!" Masaki exclaimed.

I giggled to myself seeing that exchange. I guess it's still too early for Reina to think of romance…

Ah! I can't dawdle here for long! That idiot will surely try leaving early because he hates the mood of Valentine's Day!

If he wasn't so troublesome, I could have tried seeing if Reina would give me some chocolate… You best be there, waiting for me!

******

(Mai's PoV)

"Hey!" I exclaimed.

"Ouch!" Yuu exclaimed as I slapped his back… Then as I stopped running, I started taking deep breaths to recover my strength. White smoke came out of my mouth with each breath, as it was way too cold right now.

"What's up, Mai?" Yuu asked me.

"What's up!?" I exclaimed back. What's up with this nonchalant attitude!? It's his fault that I'm this out of breath!

"Why are you angry!?" He asked me.

"Ah, well… Uhn… Sorry, it's just… Here, this." I clumsily apologized to him like this, as I didn't run after him just to fight, so… I took out the package from my bag and handed it over to him.

“Ah, chocolate?” He asked me as he picked them up.

“Yeah, you didn’t get any this year, did you, Yuu?” I asked him. Then, I started rubbing my cheeks while muttering ‘it’s cold’ to justify my red face… Well, it’s true that it’s cold though.

“Ah… Well, I’m just an otaku, so this kind of normie event has nothing to do with me.” Yuu said, then started muttering stuff about why he always goes home early exactly because of that.

Regardless of those words though, he started eating my homemade chocolate, as usual, “Is it tasty?” I asked him.

“Yep. Your chocolate is as delicious as ever.” He replied.

“Well… Be glad that a nerd like you is blessed with my homemade chocolate every year!” I exclaimed.

He giggled, “Yeah, thank you. I’m truly happy right now.”

It was kinda embarrassing to see him happily eat my chocolate, so I averted my eyes from him.

Then, I rubbed my red cheeks again… I wonder if he understands how rare it is for me to make chocolate for someone…

“Ah, right, you said it was too cold… Sorry about that.” Yuu said.

“W-whoa!?” And then, I exclaimed this, as he wrapped the scarf that he had been wearing just a few seconds ago around my neck.

“Thank you for the chocolate.” He said.

I buried my face on the scarf that smelt like Yuu, and stared at him with mixed feelings, “I can’t protect my ears…” I muttered.

“Huh?” He asked.

“I can’t reach that high with a scarf.” My ears are surely red right now, I wanted to hide them from him…

“Ah!” Suddenly, Yuu yelled.

“Eh? Why the sudden shout?” Did he suddenly notice it? Or did he have a promise or something he was late for? I don’t think Reina would have scheduled to play with him today though…

“There’s a Valentine’s event in a game I’m playing! I need to hurry home!” Yuu exclaimed.

…

“I-it’s important!” He shouted next.

…

“Look, I don’t get much chocolate in real life, but I can get plenty in the 2D world, okay!?” Was what Yuu said next, “S-so I’ll go on ahead, alright!? Laters!”

Then, Yuu turned around and darted home…

I exhaled a big sigh, then buried my nose on his scarf… Seriously…

That’s just like him, I suppose.

And yet, here was I, grinning while looking at his back.

******

(Yuuki’s PoV)

That was dangerous… I hope she didn’t notice how wide my smile was…

And well, her defenseless face was just… It was hard to stare at her for too long. Especially with how obviously happy I get when receiving her chocolate.

Well… It was very delicious. This year too, it was well worth it to leave school early.

Chapter 212 – Dealing with the Serdis Financial City – part two

(Gregoir's PoV)

"Thank you for inviting me today, lord Gregoir" One of the people invited to my party greeted me like that, so I greeted them in response.

I didn't care much for most of the people invited today, but I had to at least keep up the appearances when handling them, even if it was a pain.

"Will things really be okay?" Gillian asked me.

"Don't worry, if the girl is incompetent, then I can just push all the blame of whatever happens to her, and that will be that." I replied.

"I mean… I think you should be worrying about yourself." Gillian replied.

I understood where he was coming from. He was a trustworthy man and brought over a hundred men with him, yet was thoroughly defeated, so I have to be wary, but I don't think the girl will harm us in the middle of a ball.

"To think we have to party with some people from the slums…" One of the people invited here said.

"Those nobodies' smell disgust me…" Another one said.

I stop paying attention to their conversation for one second, and it already degenerates to such annoying mood killer topics? "Come on, everyone, it's

a party. Let's enjoy ourselves." I told them.

They both went silent to my words… Truly uninteresting people they are.

"Seems like Reiko has arrived." One of my subordinates said. Finally, the star of the show is here!

Gillian told me that Reiko is actually a pseudonym, but that's irrelevant. I'll see now if she's competent and worth working together with, or if she's a worthless person that needs to be crushed.

"Everyone, let us welcome our guest of honor!" As I loudly stated that, the venue went quiet, "Please enter, Reiko!"

Then, as the door opened, she came inside while being accompanied by a gigantic knight, "Thank you for inviting me today." She said in her native language. Most people here couldn't understand it, but her manners clearly showed politeness, which was plenty.

Though I have to say it is strange that she came to this country without even learning the language first, but I suppose that's not something for me to worry about.

"Everyone, this is Inosensho, my escort knight. He doesn't talk, but you don't have to worry about it. After all…" As she introduced her knight, he bowed down to everyone and… Removed his helmet.

I see… No wonder Gillian couldn't kill this one.

"A monster…" One person murmured.

"Why is that here…?" Another asked.

The pure darkness emanating from the place that the knight's head was supposed to be was truly terrifying…

"So, we came to this party to talk to the supporters of Gregoir." Reiko nonchalantly said.

“T-that’s right! Everyone, she is my collaborator!” I exclaimed, trying to regain control of the situation.

Don’t be afraid, don’t be swallowed by the momentum. She surely took me off guard, but this is my ball, I won’t let you do as you please here.

“I understand you all may be suspicious of her, especially with how she isn’t even able to speak our language, but I can assure you that she is a worthwhile person, which is why I invited her here today!” I told everyone.

As long as I can convince them all to act as I want them to, it doesn’t matter how terrifying she may be. I just need to keep everything under control.

“Oh, and by the way, I brought a present to you all.” Reiko said.

“A present? That was unexpected… I wonder what it might be.” I replied.

Is she trying to bribe them first before winning them over? That’s not a bad plan, I suppose.

Or so I thought… Until I saw her bring something, no someone, out of her shadow.

“I brought… This country’s princess!” She exclaimed.

Princess Abigail was tied up and gagged… Why did she bring the princess, the one the future Grand Duke was expected to marry, right to this ball?

Everyone was horrified by the sight, and nobody could speak a word… Even Gillian seemed to be astonished by what happened just now.

“By the way, I also sent a threatening letter to Fastria, on the name of Serdis, saying that ‘we’ had kidnapped the princess.” Reiko said something even more unbelievable.

Even the interpreter couldn’t react to those words, but those that could understand the language went pale at her statement.

“L-lord Gregoir! The forces of Fastria are approaching!” One of my soldiers rushed inside the venue while uttering those words, “They sent a messenger, saying that, ‘We’ll defeat the evil Serdis that is trying to get rid of the princess without going through a legitimate election!’ milord!”

The party venue went completely out of control as they heard those words… I stared at that madwoman, wondering what I was even supposed to do at this situation.

“Well, like this we don’t need to worry about persuading anyone, right?” Reiko said.

Ah… I see… She truly had no intention of talking to anyone…

“Raise up, everyone! Protect the princess from the evil Fastrias, who have ruined the sanctity of the Grand Duke election! Fight as the loyal retainers you are! Fight as those with the duty of keeping this country clean!” Reiko then exclaimed this. Even if most people couldn’t understand her words, they probably understood that she was ordering them to go to battle just from her tone alone…

Truly… I have been had.

Chapter 213 – Dealing with the Serdis Financial City – part three

Once the fight started, the people of Serdis seemed to be panicking quite a bit, but… Well, it's not really my problem, and I can't even understand what they were saying, so I just kept on enjoying the food available on the venue.

There was quite a bit of tasty food here. Way better than what I ate on the first inn I spent the night at.

I wonder if I should get a cooking skill… It's not very useful, but it could allow me to delicious food in-game more often… But should I really? I could get some other skills with those points, after all… Let's take a look at the list of skills a bit.

Ah, there is an interesting one here, a chanting-related skill that allows you to improve your buffs. It's impractical during battle, but I could use it to buff all my familiars if I know that I am soon going to get into a big battle… Should I get it? I guess it wouldn't hurt to.

And in the meantime, the people from Serdis just seemed to be panicking more and more… Was it too much to give information related to secret passages of the venue and the like to the men of Fastria? I didn't want the guys from Serdis escaping that easily though.

Oh well, let's just keep on eating. They surely put quite some effort into making this food, so it would be a waste if nobody ate it due to the battle.

“Uhn… Princess, you’re not participating?” Gillian suddenly asked me.

“Am I supposed to?” I asked him back.

“Eh?” Was his reaction, “I mean… If we’re defeated here, you’ll be surrounded and have no way to escape, right?”

“Oh, I’m confident that I’d be able to escape.” I replied.

He stayed silent after I said that, so I figured I’d relieve him a bit, “Ah, I guess I can participate a bit, I just didn’t want to be the only one fighting.” I told him.

“I see…” Gillian said.

After all, I don’t want those flashy people forcing all the hard work onto me… Rather they like it or not, they too will have to play.

“Lady Reiko, please! Lend your knight to us! Let him fight on our side!” Suddenly, Gregoir came to the conversation while begging for help. I suppose it’s about time.

Though there was something weird in his request, so I figured I’d ask him about it, “Eh? You’re asking for Inosensho’s help and not mine?”

“I mean… Wouldn’t a knight be better suited to battle than the young lady?” Gregoir said.

“Ah, I see…” I replied. Gillian barely saw me do anything, and the one he lost to was Inoue, so… I guess that it can’t be helped that they think Inoue is the stronger one.

I put the plate of food I was eating to the side, then got up, “Well, don’t worry. I’ll participate.”

“Huh?” Gregoir was confused.

“Well… I guess it’ll work out somehow.” Gillian sighed.

I suppose it's about time that I start playing, right? "<Divine Possession: Kageyama>"

Once the shadow below my feet wrapped itself around me, Inoue split himself up, and moved into Kageyama's shadow.

Then, with Inoue possessing the dress, Azabu's cloak moving back to me, and Yamada moving back to my shortsword, "Well, I'm going." I told them.

Leaving the two stupefied people behind me, I rushed to the dance party.

Chapter 214 – Handling the Meffy Commercial Nation

“<Shadow Sword>” I made Kageyama stretch my shortsword into an odachi, so that I could use the <Great Destroying Flash> skill, cutting a huge line of death through the enemy army.

Then, as I rushed forward to the middle of their group, I stretched out my threads and used <Shadow Clone> to further increase the area taken by my threads, locking down all escape avenues that the Fastria army could use.

And now, time to try out some <Dance> skills. Yuu told me that normal <Martial Art> skills would have limited utility while wearing a dress, so it would be better if I tried learning some <Dance> skills just in case.

“<Sabre Dance: Cherry Blossoms>” Then, as I started dancing around while cutting my enemies to pieces, I kinda realized that I wasn’t able to properly aim my skill at the places I wanted… Was it because my skill level is too low? I didn’t invest that much into the dancing skills…

There was also one person that was still alive even after cutting his arms and legs off, which felt like a total waste of attacks… I guess I’ll just forcefully aim for the neck and try controlling my body myself instead of letting the skill motions guide my steps. I should still get some benefits from this for as long as I move in a dance-like manner.

Then, for the next experiment… “<Sabre Dance: Crimson Cherry>”

I parried the sword swing of a nearby soldier, squeezed his neck with my hand, then took a step back and made a large swing with my sword, creating a black flash that cut through the skies, and any soldier in its path.

Then, the men started falling, spilling their blood just like falling red cherry blossoms… How troublesome, even if the dress is red, the blood stains are still easily visible from anyone looking from up close. I was hoping to not dirty it.

Oh well, I can always say that it's a floral pattern or something, so let's not mind that… Also, it did look nice that the lower part of the dress was much darker now due to the blood stains, while the upper part just had some blood stains here and there, it made for a nice image, so let's take a screenshot of it.

The soldiers seemed to be scared of something while I skipped through the blood while searching for the ideal screenshot location, but I didn't mind it.

But then, as I moved around, I happened to find Dirk Fastria perchance… How surprising. I didn't expect him to be leading the forces directly. Does he really like the princess that much? Can't say I understand those emotions at all.

The soldiers then started shouting something and positioning themselves around Dirk, probably to protect him or something… But even though they seemed to have a solid defensive formation, it's still useless, you know?

I used my threads to throw a good chunk of the vanguard to the ceiling. The survivors were inflicted with some deadly poison that I put on the threads.

Then, I threw some explosives towards them to finish the job.

The mages then tried to fight back, but I just threw the bodies of the vanguard towards them with my threads, completely disrupting their spellcasting… Which caused a huge chain reaction of explosions.

And now, all that was left was the dumbfounded enemy general, Dirk Fastria.

Chapter 215 – Handling the Meffy Commercial Nation – part two

(Dirk's PoV)

I woke up… Where am I? I was bringing a private army of mercenaries with me to try rescuing Abby who had been kidnapped by Serdis and then… Then what again?

My memory is a bit fuzzy, but I am tied up to a chair, am gagged, and am on a dark basement… So I guess things didn't go well.

Then, I heard a woman's voice. I turned towards it and saw her. That crazy woman that Abby was investigating, but that somehow appeared in the middle of the battlefield and wiped out all my soldiers!

The woman then said something else. I couldn't quite understand it, because it was on the language of the Western countries though.

… Why did this woman have to appear and cause such chaos in the middle of our election… And why did she bring Abby here too? Abby is crying right now… Why does she have to make my beloved cry too!?

That woman said something else, and after a small pause, Abby asked me, "What are you angry about?"

Then, the woman removed my gag… Is she using our princess as an interpreter!? How can she have so little respect…?

"What are you going to do to Abby!?" I asked the woman.

Abby then said something to the woman. She probably translated it to the woman's language.

This is so disgusting… I'm sorry for not knowing her language, Abby. I wish I was able to talk to this madwoman without your help…

After the woman said something, Abby, begrudgingly, translated it to me, "Nothing in particular… She just wants to take over the throne."

… I suppose she must have allied herself with Serdis then. And since Sekondia didn't involve themselves on the battle, she probably took them over too.

Disgusting… I want to puke… She basically has the whole country on her hands already, but instead of simply taking it over, she intends to put a puppet ruler on the throne?

The woman said something else, which Abby translated, "She needs something from you, Dirk…"

"What is it?" I asked, then Abby translated it.

I was biting my lips at this point… I wanted to kill this woman, but there was nothing I could do while tied up like this.

Then, the woman said something else… Abby gasped and opened her eyes wide.

She must have said something really troublesome… The woman then said a single word to Abby.

Abby's eyes got tearful… She bit her lips, then said, "She wants you to show your support for… For Gregoir Serdis… In the election."

… She can't be serious. She wants me to agree with marrying Abby off to that disgusting man?

"I refuse! I won't let Abby marry that man!" I exclaimed.

“Dirk…” Abby was crying openly now. It hurt me to see her like this… I’m sorry I couldn’t help you, but… I’m not going to betray you, nor this country, Abby!

The woman said something, Abby then replied with more strength than she has been replying with so far… I guess she must have translated my words to the woman.

“Just you wait, my father is going to bring a large army filled with high priests to destroy you, you Apostle of Chaos!” I exclaimed next.

Abby then exclaimed some words to the woman, so she must have been translating this too.

I got some courage from how Abby was openly antagonizing the woman too… It helped me feel a bit less anxious about the current situation.

And yeah, it’ll be alright. Father did tell me before I left that, if I were to fail, he would invest as much money as he could to bring as big of an army as possible to salvage the situation, so… By now, he must already be on his way to bring the strongest orderly warriors to help us out.

After a short silence, the woman had a small exchange with Abby, and after it, Abby told me that, “She said that she understands our point, but…”

Abby then looked towards the woman. I guess the woman didn’t complete the sentence before asking Abby to translate it? What is she going to do then?

I didn’t need to ask… Because the woman took out a head from her shadow… “Father…” I muttered.

Abby wailed… She couldn’t stand anymore… She crouched down on the ground and puked…

What are we going to do now…?

Once Abby stopped puking, the woman said something, but Abby just sobbed… After a small while, the woman said something again.

This time, Abby translated it, “She said she’ll ask you this again… Will you support Gregoir Serdis in the election?”

There’s no way out of this predicament without father’s help…

But then… If I accept this… Abby will be married to that disgusting man… I can’t do it. I can’t let her go through such a miserable fate. I can’t let her spend the rest of her life with that guy… There’s no way she’ll be happy like this.

But if I don’t accept, I’ll surely die, won’t I?

… Me dying is better than Abby suffering. And if the entire Fastria family is wiped out by this woman, then maybe the people will notice something is amiss with the election, so it might maybe be canceled… Maybe… Maybe, like this, Abby might still be able to find someone else… Somebody that can make her happy.

It’s a bet, but… It’s better than just giving up here, “I refuse! Even if I die here, I won’t give up on making Abby happy!” I exclaimed.

Abby didn’t translate this one, but… It seems like the woman understood what I meant from just my tone.

Then, she picked up a small cube from her shadow, and said something. Immediately after it, the cube started changing shape, and became a strange tool… I think it was something that was being developed by Sekondia? A small weapon of sorts?

The woman then pointed the thing in her hands to a glass cup nearby, and… A loud sound echoed, and the glass shattered… Yes, this is definitely a weapon, and definitely strong enough to kill me.

The woman then asked me something… Abby translated it, “Then, one more time. Are you going to support Gregoir Serdis in the election?”

Abby was shaking as she said those words, but… I’m not going to change my mind, “I refuse. If you want to kill me, then kill me.” I told her.

Abby then translated it… I wish Abby wouldn't have to see her lover being killed right in front of her, but… This is for the best. Even if it leaves a scar in her heart, she can at least have a chance of being happy like this.

Then, the woman sighed, and pointed the weapon towards… Abby's forehead.

She then said something… Abby was panicking, but the woman said something again.

"Fi-five!" Abby exclaimed. She was trembling horribly and hugging her own shoulders… This can't be serious. She isn't making Abby translate a countdown, right…?

The woman said something once more… Abby translated it, "F-f-four!"

"Please stop it…" I begged.

The woman said another word, "T-t-t-th-three… No… No, no!" Abby exclaimed.

To marry that disgusting man… Or dying here and now… How can I make Abby happy…? What is the best future…?

The woman said another word… Abby just repeated 'No!' over and over again… She can't even translate it anymore… She was crying and sobbing non-stop…

The woman said one more word.

"Fine! I'll do it! I'll support Gregoir, so… Please stop it…" I begged her.

In the end, I just can't let Abby die… Even if she has to marry that hateful man… At least she'll be alive.

The woman said something that I didn't understand, then stored the weapon… She must have understood my intent again.

Then, she picked Abby up and started leaving… And I could only watch their backs as they left…

“Damn it… Damn it!” I exclaimed to myself… I couldn’t even apologize to Abby, because the woman took her away… I couldn’t even say goodby to her… “I’m sorry Abby… I’m so sorry…” I muttered to myself as I cried.

Someone working for that woman later came and freed me from the chair and… A few days later, due to the results of the Grand Duke Election, it was decided that Abby would marry Gregoir Serdis.

Chapter 216 – Handling the Meffy Commercial Nation – part three

“Congratulations on your engagement.” I told Gregoir and Princess Abigail.

We were currently in the same venue that Dirk had attacked a small while back, though this time the people gathered here are quite different, even if the majority are still part of the Serdis group.

Right now, the party’s purpose is to celebrate the engagement, as well as the election of Gregoir Serdis as the Grand Duke of Meffy.

“Thank you for all your help, Reiko, this wouldn’t have been possible without you. You’re very happy for her help too, right, Abby?” Gregoir said this as he openly caressed her body.

“Ah… Of course… Thank you…” Princess Abigail said.

She wasn’t being that comfortable when being caressed by this pig-like man who one-sidedly decided to call her by a nickname, but well, that’s just the fate of political marriages. High nobility cannot complain about being married off by a pig-like man.

“My name is actually Rena, by the way, so call me like that from now on.” I told Gregoir.

“Of course, I understand.” He replied.

He was a bit surprised by it, but I couldn’t care less. I just didn’t want this pig uttering mom’s name anymore.

“Anyways, will you tell us about the two people behind you?” Gregoir asked me.

“I was about to get to it. This one is Dirk.” I pointed towards the man with an incredibly angry expression that was right behind me.

“Oh my, you brought Dirk Fastria with you?” Gregoir asked.

“No no. The Fastria family is no more, as they tried to undermine the legitimacy of the election, right? This is just Dirk.” I told him.

“Oh, of course. You’re right about that.” Gregoir replied.

It was really easy to push all the blame to the Fastrias when the head of the family was dead, and Dirk was under my custody, so the family is no more… And well, their vassals can’t do much without the heir anyways.

“Anyways, Dirk is a very patriotic man who is quite brilliant. It’s almost as if he was raised like the heir of a big company, you know?

“Since he also has a strong desire to help princess Abigail, I decided he’d be a good assistant for you, Gregoir.” I made it clear with my expression, that this was not a suggestion, but an order.

“Ah, I see… I’ll be glad to have him work by my side then.” Gregoir replied.

Like this, any Fastria vassal who wishes to rebel will be held back since Dirk is being held as a hostage… And at the same time, he’ll be a shackle to Gregoir, while also being a living seed of dissent.

Not to mention that since he is there under my orders, Gregoir cannot harm him, so Gregoir will have no easy way out of this mess… Essentially weakening the national power of Meffy considerably.

“And the next one is Eren Claudia Wallace. King of the Wallace Kingdom.” I introduced Eren next.

“It’s a pleasure.” Eren greeted everyone.

He was grumbling about it when I pulled him all the way here from the Beginners' City, but he is doing his job properly now.

And once his title was formally announced, both princess Abigail and Gregoir ended up having a completely dumbfounded expression on their faces. The rest of the party instantly went quiet as well.

"Abigail Meffy Landork and Gregoir Meffy Serdis, you two are now gracefully awarded with the titles of Dukes of the Wallace Kingdom." Eren told them.

Gregoir and Dirk went pale at this statement, while Abigail was about to faint. Gillian gently supported her from behind though, so she didn't fall down.

"You two will be given control of the territories of the Sekondia City, the Serdis City, and their affiliated territories within the Meffy district of the Wallace Kingdom, any objections?" Eren asked them.

"Ah… No, of course not… Your majesty." Gregoir replied.

Then, Eren gave a ceremonial dagger and a bunch of documents to Gregoir, and said, "Let's schedule the official ceremony to celebrate your promotion later, then.

"As for Bruce Sekondia, he'll be working as a Lieutenant for the military of the Wallace Kingdom." Eren told them.

Gregoir wiped off the incredibly greasy sweat off his face, then knelt down and started looking over the documents.

I wonder if he is happy about being given control over the Sekondia territory… Though well, Bruce Sekondia is my servant, so that delicious industrial area is actually mine. Gregoir has it in name only.

But it would be a pain to be its ruler in name, as I'd need to actually show up in case some trouble occurred, so it's better to leave those annoying bureaucracies to be handled by the puppets instead.

“Ah…” Former Princess Abigail finally muttered something.

“What is it?” Eren asked her.

“Well… It’s just… Who will rule the territories associated with the city of Fastria?” She asked.

“Those will be under the direct control of the Wallace Royal Family.” He replied.

“I see…” She muttered.

It just couldn’t be helped. That region will be the most annoying one, so we should make sure to wipe out any annoying vassals that try getting in the way of our ruling. While I want the central power of Meffy to be weak, I don’t want people actively trying to rebel after all, it would be a hassle.

“And that should conclude the announcements… Then, Rena, I need to consult with you about something, can we go talk?” Eren then said.

“Oh? Alright.” I replied.

Can’t say I know what was Eren’s reason for that, but I went along with him.

Once we were outside the venue, I asked him, “Well, what did you want to consult about?”

“Well… Just what do you think of someone who steals a whole country for a souvenir?” He asked me back.

“Wouldn’t that person be crazy? One can’t carry a country.” I replied.

“… Then what did you get me as a souvenir?” He asked.

“A direct continuation of our territory, a base of operations to expand into the Northern portion of the continent, and a high amount of money and resources to further fund future war expenses and increase our overall national treasury.” I told him.

“Damn it…” Eren muttered.

“Eh? Are you dissatisfied with it? Why though…?

“Oh, I see! Should I have given you princess Abigail too?” I asked him.

“Huh!?” He seemed to be confused, so I figured I’d explain it.

“I wouldn’t recommend this course of action as it will be more troublesome to handle this territory like that, but I suppose it can’t be helped if Eren wants a beautiful woman by his side. I can add that to the deal too, I guess.” I told him.

Really though, the current arrangement was probably the ideal one, but mom did tell me that gifts and surprises are meant to be done in a way that makes the other party happy, so I guess I should cancel Abigail’s engagement with Gregoir?

Eren sighed, said, “Hey, Rena.” then walked closer to me.

“What?” I asked, while still trying to think of an ideal solution to the problem.

He got extremely close to me, to the point that we were almost touching one another. I had to look up to keep staring at his eyes.

Then, for some reason, Eren gently lifted my chin with his fingers and said, “A beautiful woman is right in front of me though?”

“Eren…?” I asked. I didn’t quite get what he was doing right now, so I just stared back at him, wondering what he’d say next.

And yet… No words came. The both of us just stayed silent, staring at each other’s eyes, for quite a while.

… I really don’t get what he is thinking. What should I do? Understanding people’s feelings is hard enough already, but I don’t have enough empirical evidence to base myself on in this situation, so I’m totally lost.

“Ah! Enough already!” Eren suddenly exclaimed.

“Eren?” I asked, still confused about what just happened.

“Are you a wild animal or something!? Will you lose if you look away!?” He exclaimed.

“I don’t know what you’re angry about…” I told him honestly.

“Why are you stupidly and honestly looking back forever! Be a bit more self-conscious or have a bit of shame at least!” He replied.

“Huh…?” I don’t get it… Mom told me that I should talk to people while looking them in the eyes… Is there supposed to be some sort of exception in certain cases? Did I happen to meet one of those exceptions, so Eren got indignant about it?

But it’s hard to know what was the trigger that was supposed to make me look away…

“Your body may look like this, but you’re still a child on the inside, I suppose…” Eren sighed.

“I’m sixteen years old though?” I was still quite confused. What of my behavior was childish?

“You’re just way too pure… For better or for worse.” Eren told me.

“Huh…?” I couldn’t make a good reply for a while now…

“Well, I guess it would be a sin to have any feelings for you when you’re like this.” Eren sighed once more as he said that, but I just couldn’t understand what he was saying… What got him angry? And what is he suddenly trying to convince himself of?

… Well, it seems like the motive of his dissatisfaction weren’t my souvenirs though, so I suppose it’s alright.

Then, as Eren turned his back to me and started walking back to the venue, he stopped moving, turned around and said, “Oh yeah, I almost forgot to mention it… This dress looks great on you.”

“Oh, is that so?” I replied. I wasn’t planning on fighting today, so I was using a long dress this time, but I didn’t expect to actually receive a praise for it.

Then… There was silence for a small while, until eventually, Eren broke the silence by saying, “Well, that was it. Bye.”

“Huh…?” I was still confused by it, but Eren went back to the party venue, so I couldn’t really ask him to explain what was all this just now.

Maybe he is just tired? Perhaps I should ask Hanako and Takeo to make some tea for him with their scales later.

Chapter 216.5 – White Day Special

(Yuu's PoV)

"Reina-!" Mai started exclaiming.

"Wait, Mai!" I hurriedly grabbed Mai's hand before she got too close to Reina… This was close. She was about to invite Reina to go home together with us.

Mai was surprised by me suddenly grabbing her hand, so I let go of it, "Ah, sorry!" and apologized.

"Ah, it's alright… Is everything okay?" She asked me.

We were both rubbing our own hands now… It was a bit awkward.

Nonetheless, even if this is very embarrassing, I have to get the courage and say it! Let's do this! "Today… Would you like to go home with me? There's a place I want to stop by." I told her.

"Oh? Alright." Mai's expression broke into a smile, "Then, I'll just call Reina and-"

"Ah, no! I mean… I'd rather have just the two of us…" I stopped her again.

Then, we both went silent… Wait, no! That's not how this was supposed to be going! What's up with this awkward mood!?

I couldn't look at her face right now… This is so embarrassing…

“Then, uhn… Shall we go?” Mai asked me.

“Ah, y-yes…” I replied.

“Okay…” Mai said.

After yet another small while of silence, I remembered to point out something important, “Ah, this is not a date, okay…? Like uhn… It’s just…”

“I know, idiot.” Mai cut me off with those words… She also kicked my knee.

“Ah, right… Of course.” I replied.

Then, we got our bags and left the classroom together.

******

(Yuu’s PoV)

“Yummy…” Mai happily commented as she took a bite of the shortcake in front of her. That relaxed joyful expression is one that she never shows at school.

“Is it good?” I asked her.

“Yes! Absolutely delicious!” She exclaimed.

I could feel as if flowers bloomed behind her with each of her smiles, it was quite the wonderful sight… I’m glad I took her here.

“So, what did you do anyways? Did you break one of my things, so you decided to buy me a cake as an apology?” Mai asked.

“Eh? No! It’s nothing like that!” I hurriedly replied.

I mean… There were cases like it before, but this was not it this time around.

“Really…?” She asked.

… I wish she wouldn’t glare at me like that, especially not while holding a fork in such a menacing way.

“It’s true… It’s just that… Well, today is White Day, you know?” I told her honestly.

“Oh, White Day… You’re right on that.” Then, she stabbed the shortcake with her fork, while giggling a bit to herself, “I wasn’t expecting anything from an unpopular otaku, so this was a pretty nice surprise.” She mocked me.

But you know… You’re not the only one that knows how to mock the other, “I’m deeply thankful for the grace of spending some time with the Saintess.” I told her.

“Oh, come on! Don’t bring that up!” She embarrassedly asked.

“Alright, alright…” I obediently withdrew.

“Ah, Yuu, you have some cream there.” As Mai said that, she reached her hands out to my lips, scooped up some cream that was dirtying my mouth, then put it in her own mouth, “I just can’t leave some delicious cream lying around like that, right?”

“Ah…” I couldn’t quite react to this one properly… So embarrassing… I averted my eyes from her.

“What? You aren’t okay with being treated like a child even though you referred to me as Saintess?” Mai giggled.

“Ah… Uhn… Huh?” I couldn’t reply to that one at all, but I could see that Mai was grinning.

“Well, it’s White Day, so I’ll forgive you. Consider it my blessing.” She giggled once more as she said that.

“Ah… Thank you, I appreciate it.” I somehow managed to reply.

She really got way too close this time. It feels hard to think properly… Though I'm also happy. It's nice that we can still talk like this even after so many years passed since our first meeting.

But it is kinda frustrating that we can't talk at school… Huh? Now where did those thoughts come from? This isn't like me. I shouldn't tarnish Mai's reputation by letting people know that she mingles with an otaku like me.

"Is something the matter?" Mai asked me. I guess she noticed that I was being troubled over my thoughts.

"Ah, it's nothing…" I replied. I'd rather not have her worry about this kind of thing… What can I do to get her mind off of it?

Oh, right, there's this, "Mai, you also have some cream there."

Then, I did the same thing that she did. I put my fingers on her lips, picked up the cream, and brought it to my mouth.

My hand was trembling the whole time, but… Somehow, I managed to make the whole movement in one swift motion.

My heart was beating way too loudly right now, and I felt as if all sound had disappeared from the store… Can she hear how fast it is beating?

In order to not look at her face, I drank a bit of tea, but I couldn't even taste it.

"Ah… Eh… Ah… Te… Eh?" Mai murmured this incomprehensible thing.

Is she alright? I was a bit worried… Taking another sip of the tea to get some courage, I stole a glance at her face.

"Y-Y-Yuu… D-did you just…?" Mai muttered this while covering her lips with the back of her hand.

… Her face was beet red right now though. I was surprised Mai could make this kind of expression.

“W-what is it?” She asked me.

“Ah… N-no… Nothing.” I averted my gaze again as I said that.

I can’t quite see my face right now, but I’m sure I too am beet red right now, so I’d rather avoid letting her see me…

We stayed silent for a small while… What an awkward mood…

“Ah… I need to go home soon. My parents won’t be home today, so I need to cook dinner.” Mai suddenly told me.

“I-is that so…?” I asked her.

While still in this awkward mood, Mai slowly started packing her things, since she had already finished eating.

I tried to avoid letting her notice what I was thinking, but instead ended up making things super awkward… I should be more careful in the future.

I couldn’t even look at her as she got up and started leaving…

But then, just as she was moving past me, she stopped for a second and whispered on my ear, “Your ears are quite red, you know?”

“Eh!?” I exclaimed. I was hoping she hadn’t seen it, but somehow…

I could only slump on my chair, while Mai giggled, then left the building.

Seriously… I stabbed my fork into the shortcake that was still in my plate… What am I even supposed to do right now?

And yet, I could notice that there was still a faint smile on my face, even after all that.

******

(Mai’s PoV)

This was way too dangerous… What was that reaction from Yuu? Since when can he behave like that?

And that bashful face of his was… I wonder if it was too petty of me to leave while pointing out that I noticed it.

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*Translator's Note: White Day is a Japanese Holiday that happens on March 14th, a week after Valentine's. In it, it is expected that men give chocolate to the women that gave them chocolate on Valentine's.

Chapter 217 – Official Bulletin Board – eighteen

[At The Borders] General Chat Thread 512 [Things Are Changing Fast]

1. Nameless Adventurer

This is a general chat thread.

Let’s write freely.

However, if you don’t abide the basic rules, this thread will disappear.

Previous thread: http: // ******

>> 980 Next thread, please.

254. Nameless Adventurer

Their first kiss was with the Perverted Gentleman!

255. Nameless Adventurer

Poor person…

256. Nameless Adventurer

> 247

This is just sad, lol!

257. Nameless Adventurer

My sympathies, lol!

258. Nameless Adventurer

How did it even happen!? Lol!

259. Nameless Adventurer

I guess it must have been a perverted first kiss…

260. Nameless Adventurer

Someone summarize it to me?

261. Nameless Adventurer

The two people found each other in the city, and they did pvp while betting on their important things… One person bet their first kiss, while the Perverted Gentleman betted his pervertedness.

Needless to say who won.

262. Nameless Adventurer

Well, I guess that was an expected outcome.

263. Nameless Adventurer

Why would anyone agree to this kind of bet!? Lol!

264. Nameless Adventurer

Well, that was something.

265. Nameless Adventurer

I mean, at least they were doing it for a noble cause, to make the Perverted Gentleman become just a Gentleman. I can respect the will.

266. Nameless Adventurer

I wonder if kisses do feel real while in-game… I mean, we are in VR after all.

267. Nameless Adventurer

Some couples already stated that it feels basically the same as normal kissing.

268. Nameless Adventurer

Oh my.

269. Nameless Adventurer

I guess that's that then.

270. Nameless Adventurer

Wait a minute, there are couples playing this game?! What heresy!

271. Nameless Adventurer

Let's hunt those normies down!

272. Nameless Adventurer

Gaming is not for normies!

273. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, I wanna practice my killing on those couples!

274. Nameless Adventurer

As a player of the Order faction, I can’t allow you to do that, as it would disrupt the game’s environment.

275. Nameless Adventurer

As a player of the Chaos faction, I wanna do it because I’m jealous.

276. Nameless Adventurer

I wanna be a neutral player that serves as a third wheel when couples are dating! Lol!

277. Nameless Adventurer

Hold on a second.

278. Nameless Adventurer

This craziness is different from the usual.

279. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, this is not how the hijacking usually works…

280. Nameless Adventurer

I want the couples to escape safely.

281. Nameless Adventurer

No no, not that, I mean like… There are no neutral players that would do something as mild as just being a third wheel, right? They’re all crazy.

282. Nameless Adventurer

Only the top players are mad.

283. Nameless Adventurer

Well… Those surely are mad.

284. Nameless Adventurer

Order: Perverted madman.

Chaos: Psychopath madwoman.

Neutral: Crazy man that only cares for his Karma Value.

Yeah, the top ones are hopeless.

285. Nameless Adventurer

Hopeless indeed.

286. Nameless Adventurer

Is there anyone with actual common sense playing this game?

287. Nameless Adventurer

Most people do have common sense… It's just that the top players are weirdos.

288. Nameless Adventurer

I think the second place in most factions actually have plenty of common sense.

289. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah… Sure… They definitely have common sense… Yeah… Totally…

290. Nameless Adventurer

Crazy heathen! Lady Maria is the pinnacle of common sense!

291. Nameless Adventurer

Well, I guess she does have common sense alright…

292. Nameless Adventurer

On a side note, I feel like Maria is getting cuter with each passing day. I fall more and more in love with her each time I see her.

293. Nameless Adventurer

Oh dear, the church is here…

294. Nameless Adventurer

Someone dared fall in love with the Saintess!?

295. Nameless Adventurer

Love!? With lady Maria!?

296. Nameless Adventurer

Not with the Saintess…

297. Nameless Adventurer

Isn’t Yuu her boyfriend by the way?

298. Nameless Adventurer

Maybe? I wouldn’t be surprised by it at the very least.

299. Nameless Adventurer

That parasite and lady Maria!? Heresy!

300. Nameless Adventurer

Look at what you’ve done…

301. Nameless Adventurer

The worshippers are going to become even crazier than usual…

302. Nameless Adventurer

I mean, Yuu and Maria do look good next to one another at least.

303. Nameless Adventurer

They certainly seem to have a good relationship.

304. Nameless Adventurer

No way. It’s impossible.

305. Nameless Adventurer

This guy doesn’t give up! Lol!

306. Nameless Adventurer

Anyone wants popcorn!? Lol!

307. Nameless Adventurer

I now wanna know about the progress of their relationship! Lol!

308. Nameless Adventurer

Me too!

309. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, me too!

310. Nameless Adventurer

Are we seriously using the forums to discuss the theoretical love between two players…?

Well, at least the overall feeling is supportive, I guess.

311. Nameless Adventurer

And now the General Thread became full of love!

312. Nameless Adventurer

Lol!

313. Nameless Adventurer

Only Maria can make these forums talk about love! Lol!

314. Nameless Adventurer

If anyone in your party randomly fell down laughing, I bet this thread is the cause! Lol!

315. Nameless Adventurer

Definitely! Lol!

316. Nameless Adventurer

Isn’t Maria way too popular?

317. Nameless Adventurer

Well, she’s one of the few top players that actually feels kind and gentle, I guess? And she just happened to be on the right place and right time to get a sudden burst of followers running after her…

318. Nameless Adventurer

And well, she won’t kill you at first sight, unlike the Genocider.

319. Nameless Adventurer

Oh yeah, there’s that too.

320. Nameless Adventurer

That’s a good point! Lol!

321. Nameless Adventurer

She’s certainly easier to interact with.

322. Nameless Adventurer

Better than the crazy people at the top of each faction for sure! Lol!

323. Nameless Adventurer

And Maria’s in-game avatar is cute as well.

324. Nameless Adventurer

And poor Yuu gets hatred just for being at her side…

325. Nameless Adventurer

Damn that parasite!

326. Nameless Adventurer

Oh wow, such jealousy! Lol!

327. Nameless Adventurer

By the way, I heard those two have been playing together since the day the game launched, so it’s possible that they’ve known each other for a while now. Either from a different game, or from their normal day-to-day lives.

328. Nameless Adventurer

Eh!?

329. Nameless Adventurer

Yuu and Maria are friends outside the game…?

330. Nameless Adventurer

A lie… It has to be a lie…

331. Nameless Adventurer

Wait, no! Stop raising flags! Don’t let things get any worse!

332. Nameless Adventurer

We’ll lose lady Maria…

333. Nameless Adventurer

Could Maria be in love with Yuu?

334. Nameless Adventurer

Aaaaaaaaaah!

335. Nameless Adventurer

Things are getting wild! Lol!

336. Nameless Adventurer

I guess Yuu will be hunted again soon…

337. Nameless Adventurer

Some people are already running around while shouting Yuu’s name…

338. Nameless Adventurer

Oh dear.

339. Nameless Adventurer

Just a normal day on KSO, I suppose.

340. Nameless Adventurer

That guy has it rough! Lol!

341. Nameless Adventurer

Can’t wait to see how he’ll dribble his hunters this time around!

342. Nameless Adventurer

I wonder how many times he was attacked by now… I bet he is used to it at this point.

343. Nameless Adventurer

Ah…

344. Nameless Adventurer

Poor guy…

345. Nameless Adventurer

Let us pray for his safety…

346. Yuu

Can you like, not cause me trouble!?

347. Nameless Adventurer

He came to us in person!

348. Nameless Adventurer

How bold!

349. Nameless Adventurer

How did Maria’s lips taste like!?

350. Nameless Adventurer

How far have you gone with Maria!?

351. Nameless Adventurer

What’s your favorite food?

352. Nameless Adventurer

Where do you live?

353. Nameless Adventurer

Is this an AMA?

354. Yuu

Dunno.

Nowhere.

Chocolate.

I’d rather not give free doxing information.

No.

355. Nameless Adventurer

Oh lol!

356. Nameless Adventurer

He actually answered it! Lol!

357. Nameless Adventurer

> 354

Have you really done nothing with lady Maria!?

358. Nameless Adventurer

I’m curious too! What do you think of Maria?

359. Nameless Adventurer

What’s the color of your underwear!?

360. Nameless Adventurer

Now come on…

361. Nameless Adventurer

Why do you wanna know that…?

362. Nameless Adventurer

Don’t ask for my reasons!

363. Nameless Adventurer

Oh dear…

364. Nameless Adventurer

Just a normal day for KSO…

365. Nameless Adventurer

Is the AMA over?

366. Nameless Adventurer

Yuu isn’t answering…

367. Nameless Adventurer

Yuu?

368. Nameless Adventurer

Hello?

369. Nameless Adventurer

He ran away…

370. Nameless Adventurer

He must have gotten shy.

371. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, he definitely refused answer due to shyness…

372. Nameless Adventurer

I think it’s probably for the best.

373. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, most likely.

374. Nameless Adventurer

It’s okay, like this we can peep over their relationship in peace.

375. Nameless Adventurer

Crazy people are still here, it seems…

376. Nameless Adventurer

I’m so jealous… I wish I was good enough to kill Yuu.

377. Red Crow

Should I kill him for you instead?

378. Nameless Adventurer

I really envy him… Eh?

379. Nameless Adventurer

Who?

380. Nameless Adventurer

Ah, it’s a player specialized in PVP.

381. Nameless Adventurer

I think he is #7 on Chaos right now.

382. Nameless Adventurer

I mean… Would you do it for free?

383. Red crow

I don’t need a reward to kill my targets.

384. Nameless Adventurer

Oh dear, now that’s one dangerous turn that things took…

385. Nameless Adventurer

Things are getting interesting.

386. Nameless Adventurer

> 383

Eh? You'll do it for no merits at all?

387. Red crow

I'll get the fame. That's plenty.

388. Nameless Adventurer

Simple.

389. Nameless Adventurer

Well, aiming for a celebrity is one way of getting famous.

390. Red crow

Well, I'm ready for it, so let's see how it goes. You all can see the results later.

391. Nameless Adventurer

And… He's gone.

392. Nameless Adventurer

Now what?

393. Nameless Adventurer

So, a showdown between two top players!

394. Nameless Adventurer

I feel guilty…

395. Nameless Adventurer

Is there any information about this Red Crow? I never heard of him.

396. Nameless Adventurer

There’s some.

397. Nameless Adventurer

Welcome to KSO!

398. Nameless Adventurer

Red Crow is a Chaos player focused on PVP that seems to like hunting people that are hated on by others on the forums, regardless of the reason of the hate. He seems to almost always be able to kill those that he chases, so I think he might actually have a good chance of getting rid of Yuu.

399. Nameless Adventurer

So it’s a dangerous guy…

400. Nameless Adventurer

Now to see if Yuu can escape a professional online hitman!

401. Nameless Adventurer

You all forgot to mention the fact that he often gets his target wrong, so he usually fails his hunts for people that are hated on the forums…

402. Nameless Adventurer

So he’s no good! Lol!

403. Nameless Adventurer

And here I thought we’d see something interesting! Lol!

404. Nameless Adventurer

No wonder I never heard of him! Lol!

405. Nameless Adventurer

And here I was worrying for Yuu for no reason! Lol!

406. Nameless Adventurer

Come on, have some hopes! Maybe Red Crow will get the target right this once! Lol!

407. Nameless Adventurer

Thank you for your hard work!

408. Nameless Adventurer

Mission Accomplished!

Chapter 218 – Official Bulletin Board – nineteen

[Victims] General Chat Thread 517 [Too Many]

1. Nameless Adventurer

This is a general chat thread.

Let’s write freely.

However, if you don’t abide the basic rules, this thread will disappear.

Previous thread: http: // ******

>> 980 Next thread, please.

541. Nameless Adventurer

Wait, what happened? Why did he do that?

542. Nameless Adventurer

I dunno, I was assassinated from behind out of nowhere. I thought it was the Genocider killing me on a whim, but it was a completely different person.

543. Nameless Adventurer

[Sad News] Red Crow mistook another player for Yuu and killed them.

544. Nameless Adventurer

Way too annoying! Lol!

545. Nameless Adventurer

Also, I'm a woman, why was I targeted instead of Yuu!?

546. Nameless Adventurer

Wait… It can't be…

547. Nameless Adventurer

No way…

548. Nameless Adventurer

So Red Crow doesn't even know the gender of Yuu…?

549. Nameless Adventurer

Now that's just stupid…

550. Nameless Adventurer

Well, he did leave without asking any information about the target…

551. Nameless Adventurer

Ah…

552. Nameless Adventurer

Then… He just blindly murders people in hope of getting the right target?

553. Nameless Adventurer

That… Doesn't seem very productive.

554. Nameless Adventurer

Wait, what if I, the client, end up getting killed by him?

555. Nameless Adventurer

Lol

556. Nameless Adventurer

Lol

557. Nameless Adventurer

Lol

558. Nameless Adventurer

Well, it wouldn’t be impossible…

559. Nameless Adventurer

He certainly earned the fame he wanted, I guess… In a weird way.

560. Nameless Adventurer

Give me back my experience points!

561. Nameless Adventurer

Good luck with that.

562. Nameless Adventurer

No wonder he said he didn’t want a reward…

563. Nameless Adventurer

I thought that was just nice of him, but he was actually just bad at the job…

564. Nameless Adventurer

Well, I'll remember that on the next time this guy comes here…

565. Nameless Adventurer

Nobody thinks he has a chance of killing Yuu now! Lol!

566. Nameless Adventurer

By the way, how many victims are there already?

567. Nameless Adventurer

At least 21 already complained on the forums…

568. Nameless Adventurer

So many! Lol!

569. Nameless Adventurer

He is way too troublesome! Lol!

570. Nameless Adventurer

Will this keep going until he finds Yuu…?

571. Nameless Adventurer

Well, I think Red Crow tends to consider the request a failure if he is defeated.

572. Nameless Adventurer

Oh my…

573. Nameless Adventurer

But then you'd need to defeat him…

574. Nameless Adventurer

That’s troublesome…

575. Nameless Adventurer

So we only need to get revenge on him to end this…?

576. Nameless Adventurer

Good luck on beating a top player that specializes in PVP.

577. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, that seems unlikely to happen.

578. Nameless Adventurer

An impossible task.

579. Nameless Adventurer

How does he even know if he killed the right target?

580. Nameless Adventurer

There is a log that shows the names of the people that you killed, so you can check It there.

581. Nameless Adventurer

Oh, I see.

582. Nameless Adventurer

This is… Troublesome.

583. Nameless Adventurer

Troublesome indeed…

584. Nameless Adventurer

Ah!

585. Nameless Adventurer

[Sad News] Genocider now has a gun.

586. Nameless Adventurer

Of all people to get one!

587. Nameless Adventurer

Well… Lol?

588. Nameless Adventurer

She can already throw people at the speed of a bullet anyways, so it's kinda pointless to her! Lol!

589. Nameless Adventurer

She's just way too strong! Lol!

560. Nameless Adventurer

That's Genocider for you. Makes me wonder how many skills she even has, because like… She'd surely need some throw-related skills in order to throw that fast.

561. Nameless Adventurer

Well, you can get Skill Points as event rewards, so… Both her and Absolutely Inviolable Area probably have more Skill Points than they'd ever need. They can get every skill in the game by now, most likely.

562. Nameless Adventurer

Ah, that makes sense…

563. Nameless Adventurer

I guess it's impossible to catch up to those two…

564. Nameless Adventurer

At least the new Gunner class looks interesting.

565. Nameless Adventurer

I've been using a sword so far, but I wonder if I should switch.

566. Nameless Adventurer

Well, there is a charm to using a gun in a medi-fantasy game.

567. Nameless Adventurer

Archers can probably make the switch fairly easily if they want to.

568. Nameless Adventurer

Though only after they obtain a gun…

569. Nameless Adventurer

Where did the Genocider even find one?

570. Nameless Adventurer

Maybe in the Northern portion of the continent? She is a top player, so maybe she found a way to move through the borders.

571. Nameless Adventurer

I wonder who was the first victim of her gun.

572. Nameless Adventurer

Who knows!? Lol!

573. Nameless Adventurer

Never mind a person, I bet a whole country will be her victim soon.

574. Nameless Adventurer

The scale is too big! Lol!

575. Nameless Adventurer

Well, it’s Genocider we’re talking about! Lol!

576. Nameless Adventurer

Can’t we at least lower the scale to a city? Like the Beginners’ City!? Lol!

577. Nameless Adventurer

Still too big! Lol!

578. Nameless Adventurer

Reasonable expectations for the Genocider! Lol!

579. Nameless Adventurer

You’re raising too many flags…

******

[Flag Collection] General Chat Thread 521 [Thank You For Your Hard Work]

1. Nameless Adventurer

This is a general chat thread.

Let’s write freely.

However, if you don’t abide the basic rules, this thread will disappear.

Previous thread: http: // ******

>> 980 Next thread, please.

235. Nameless Adventurer

Ah… This World Announcement…

236. Nameless Adventurer

Seriously now…

237. Nameless Adventurer

Player Rena cleared the World Quest, and due to it, the Meffy Commercial Nation was annexed by the Wallace Kingdom…

238. Nameless Adventurer

Oh dear…

239. Nameless Adventurer

Our flags surely paid off! Lol!

240. Nameless Adventurer

Where is Meffy Commercial Nation anyways?

241. Nameless Adventurer

Northern portion of the continent.

242. Nameless Adventurer

She already took over a country on the new region! Lol!

243. Nameless Adventurer

It’s a festival! Let’s celebrate her achievements! Lol!

244. Nameless Adventurer

Now don’t go too crazy…

245. Nameless Adventurer

She’s way too fast…

246. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah…

247. Nameless Adventurer

Should we try attacking the Wallace Castle?

248. Nameless Adventurer

Now don’t throw your life away…

249. Nameless Adventurer

So she just annexed a whole country…

250. Nameless Adventurer

Pretty much.

251. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, pretty amazing.

252. Nameless Adventurer

Honestly unbelievable, even for her.

253. Nameless Adventurer

Absolutely crazy.

254. Nameless Adventurer

How did she even do that so fast…?

255. Nameless Adventurer

On the plus side, I think we should be able to go to the Northern portion of the continent now.

256. Nameless Adventurer

Why?

257. Nameless Adventurer

Because the Wallace Kingdom is in both Western and Northern portions of the continent now, so it should serve as an entryway for us.

258. Nameless Adventurer

Oh, right, there was that thing that didn't allow us to cross the border as we didn't have permission… I wonder how the Genocider crossed it though.

259. Nameless Adventurer

Well, I guess it's important to see the good side of things.

260. Nameless Adventurer

I wonder if there are any other conditions that need to be fulfilled before going to the Northern portion of the continent though.

261. Nameless Adventurer

Oh, now that I think about it, the Genocider probably got her gun from the Meffy Commercial Nation then.

262. Nameless Adventurer

Ah, that would make sense.

263. Nameless Adventurer

So, she unlocked a new class and opened a new area for everyone… It surely happened by accident, but it's strange to see the Genocider doing something that benefits the entire playerbase.

264. Nameless Adventurer

I pity the people she conquered though! Lol!

265. Nameless Adventurer

Well, I bet there are a lot of traumatized people at Meffy now…

266. Nameless Adventurer

And she doesn't care at all…

267. Nameless Adventurer

Well, if someone complains about her actions, she can just kill them anyways…

268. Nameless Adventurer

Though I think she isn't even aware of how popular she is.

269. Nameless Adventurer

Yeah, I don't think she knows that the Genorers exist.

270. Nameless Adventurer

She doesn't interact much with other players, after all.

271. Nameless Adventurer

Even though they love her so much… I pity the Genorers a bit.

272. Nameless Adventurer

I wonder where the Genocider will appear next.

273. Nameless Adventurer

Well, just look for the next massacre?

274. Nameless Adventurer

Would be funny if Red Crow tried to assassinate her.

275. Nameless Adventurer

Well, Genocider would definitely win that one.

276. Nameless Adventurer

Please find him and end this murder chain, Genocider!

277. Nameless Adventurer

On a side note, I don't think Red Crow has any chance of winning against Yuu without doing some research in advance, I mean… How will he deal with Yuu's crazy skills? This whole murder spree seems pointless.

278. Nameless Adventurer

Ah, don't go and make the situation look even worse than it already is…

279. Nameless Adventurer

Stop running Yuu!

280. Nameless Adventurer

Sacrifice yourself for us!

281. Nameless Adventurer

Well, I guess everyone is reaping what a handful of haters sowed…

282. Nameless Adventurer

Lol.

283. Nameless Adventurer

Well, Red Crow was too unexpected. It couldn’t be helped.

284. Nameless Adventurer

Get ready for trouble! LoL!

Chapter 219 – Umemiya Kako's Hard Work

(Kako's PoV (Blossom's actual name, she is a friend of Komari (Reina's step sister)))

"For this question… Umemiya Kako, can you answer it?" The math teacher suddenly called my name out.

This was bad… I did know the answer, but… But it was so scary. Everyone's gazes fell upon me. I was trembling. It was hard to breath…

"Umemiya?" The teacher asked again.

I had no choice, but to get up from my seat. I put my hands on my chest and looked down… Was I creepy? Were people disgusted at me?

I could vaguely see from the corner of my eye that the teacher was hoping I'd be able to answer, since he knows that I am good at math, but… The impatient look on my colleagues' eyes, their mocking smiles… And the worried expression on Komari's and Seigi's face… They were all so terrifying.

I tried making a reply, "I… I ca… Can… Cannot." but I couldn't stop trembling, never mind speaking in front of the whole class… Even though I did know the answer. It was something we had already seen a few times before, it wasn't hard, but… I just couldn't.

It was frustrating.

“I see… Then, can someone else answer it?” The teacher’s disappointment was visible, but… There was just no way. What if I made a mistake? Some people were already giggling at me right now, how bad would it be if I messed up on this easy problem? I just can’t do it… It’s too much…

Then, the bell rang. Before anyone could answer the question, the class was over, so the teacher dismissed us after giving some homework… Well, at least I won’t have to worry about my classmates’ gaze anymore.

“Kako! Let’s go home together!” Komari came closer to me and said that.

Both her and Seigi kept on talking to me even though I was so miserable… I was really thankful to them. I would still be that bullied girl that stays the whole time in the corner of the library otherwise.

And exactly because of that, “Ah, sorry, I… I have something… Something to do today.” I told them that.

“I see… Alright, next time then!” Komari exclaimed that cheerfully, but I could see that she was worried for me.

“See you next time.” Seigi too was visibly worried.

I was feeling guilty as they moved away, but… It was alright. This time, I was not trying to push them away because they were too dazzling to be next to me… This time, I will help them.

******

(Kako’s PoV)

“Hey, do you know that girl?” A boy asked his friend.

“I don’t really know any middle schooler…” His friend answered.

I was hoping I wouldn’t be noticed, or that people at least wouldn’t pay attention to me right now, but… I guess there is no way I wouldn’t call attention while wearing a middle schooler’s uniform… After all, I’m standing in front of the gates of a high school…

Will things be alright? They won't try bullying me here, will they? We're out in the open, so… I should be okay, right?

"Hey, which middle school are you from?" One of the boys asked me.

"Do you have an older brother here?" The other one asked.

I couldn't answer… Can't you please just go away? Please don't cause me trouble…

"… Am I scaring her?" One of the boys muttered.

"Kenji, you're good at talking to girls, why do you think she's troubled?" Another one of the boys said.

"I bet she's scared of Masaki's face!" The boy that is probably Kenji exclaimed.

"Eh!? Why is it my fault!?" The one that is probably Masaki exclaimed.

I started trembling and took a step back… No, I shouldn't be backing off here… I hate my offline self. Why can't I be like Blossom here…?

I just can't do anything. If someone likes me tries to show discontentment against a bully, they'll just make things worse and blame it on my bad luck… Why do things have to be like this? Why can't I stand up for myself and shine brightly like I always do online…?

"See? She's getting scared because you shouted." The Kenji boy said.

"Ugh… B-but that's just…" The Masaki boy muttered.

I tried to avoid making eye contact with them, and searched for my target… She wouldn't have gone home already, would she?

I mean, it's possible… Even though I ran here, the times their classes end shouldn't be that different from when mine end, so… Maybe she's already home. Should I give up? Should I just go home?

“Oh, Masaki, what are you doing here?” That woman’s voice…

“Oh, Ichijouji…” The Masaki person replied.

… Yeah, my target was here. Her appearance was slightly different from the game, but it was still definitely the same person. She didn’t customize her avatar much.

She has no need to hide herself, she just stands up with her own feet… I really hate this woman.

Somehow though… I mustered the strength to walk. I stood in front of Rena… Of the Genocider. Today, I’ll talk to her. I’ll tell her what I need to, without having Komari and Seigi nearby.

“Ah… Uhn… E… To…” Why is this so terrifying? Why am I trembling so much? Why can’t I look her in the eyes…?

I don’t get what I’m thinking. Why am I scared of this expressionless disgusting woman…?

The three men that had been talking to me seem to be acquainted with her, so they were just staring at the conversation from the sidelines… Are they there to protect her in case of an emergency? Will they hurt me if I say too much?

The woman said nothing… I need to tell her something, “Ah… Uhn…” Why can’t I speak…?

I hate this woman so much… I envy her so much.

She has the charisma I don’t have, the freedom I don’t, and she also has such amazing little brother and sister… And yet, even though she all that I want, that I can’t get no matter how much I wish for… She just throws them all away.

She can be so confident of herself. She can act without doubting her own decisions and… I’m just so envious of this disgusting woman.

She still didn't speak anything… I tried once more, "Well… I…"

I hate how pitiful I am. Almost as much as I hate this woman who has no empathy at all, who refuses to grab the hands of her brother and sister that keep trying to reach out for her.

She has everything she could possibly want or need, and yet… And yet… It's so frustrating… And I can't even talk to her!

"Th-this! Take this!" I shoved the letter I prepared in advance on her, then ran away.

"I see…?" I could hear the woman muttering before I got too far.

In the end, I couldn't tell it to her by mouth, so I just gave her the letter and ran away… Even though I pushed myself so hard, this was all that I could do… I'm so pathetic.

I'm glad I at least put the effort into this though. That I tried doing something to help my best friends… Even if I couldn't withstand the public eye… Even if I couldn't speak… I… Is this my limit? Is this all that I can do?

I'm really pathetic…

Once I got home, I buried my face on my pillow and screamed to myself, "Why am I so worthless!?"

I really hate being like this… If only I could be Blossom all the time… If only I could shine brightly every day… There's no way I wouldn't have been able to talk to that disgusting woman then.

… Even if I can't be Blossom while offline, I can at least be her online… Let's login. Let's become Blossom.

Chapter 220 – Ichijouji Reina's Daily Life – eleven

On today's history class, the teacher talked about the development of defense measures in World War III, about how warfare started revolving primarily on AI-manned ships and planes, and on what measures were developed to confuse the AI's targeting system in order to minimize casualties.

He also talked about the limitations of AIs and how they can't properly be made as ruthless military AIs that can't be easily fooled by the diversion strategies made by the opponents due to the way that they're coded.

After all, AIs by default end up having some personality and emotions to themselves, so if one is to rely on them, they can't expect the AIs to act on the same way that a standard computer program would.

It was… As boring as usual. Just saying stuff that I already knew about. I was definitely glad to hear the bell ending the class, as those history classes are just way too pointless.

But well, now this is out of the way, I can now think of more relevant stuff… Like the meeting with Umemiya… I wonder why she scheduled an in-game meet-up this Saturday, is it because of the guns?

"Reina!" While I was thinking of that, Mai suddenly hugged me. It was an unusual act from her, but I don't exactly dislike being hugged, so I suppose it is alright.

“What is it, Mai?” I asked her.

“Did you understand today’s class? It was quite confusing…” She asked.

… I suppose it can be more complicated if you didn’t study it in-depth at your own home in advance.

“Well, I understand more about AIs than people in all honesty.” I replied.

“Eh? Really?” She seemed to be surprised.

“Well, I often end up getting in contact with the AIs while on KSO… Though I don’t think that there is much connection between that and the lesson.” I told her honestly.

“I see… I wonder if I could get some tips from the AIs then…” Mai wondered out loud.

“Tips?” I didn’t quite get what she meant.

“Ah, well, just romantic tips.” I couldn’t understand what she was getting at at all, “Anyways, Reina! Let’s go home together!”

I don’t think it was necessary to call my name again, but I suppose there is no problem with that… Also, unusually, Yuuki doesn’t seem to be with her today, but I suppose that’s fine too.

“Alright, let’s go.” I replied.

Mai’s face somehow got red after this… Is she angry at something?

“Reina, Reina!” She called my name while lightly pulling my hand.

“Yes?” I asked her.

“Ah, I just wanted to say your name.” She said with a smile… That was a bit surprising. I don’t know how to reply to it.

“Rei, Rei!” She then exclaimed.

“What is it, mom?” I replied automatically.

“Eh? What did you just call me?” Mai was confused.

Now what is this feeling? To have my name called like that without any reason in particular… Is this warmth… Nostalgia?

“Is everything alright, Reina?” Mai asked me.

“Ah, no, it’s nothing.” I replied. Mai seemed to be anxious right now though, so… “Mai, Mai.”

“What is it, Reina?” She seemed to be a bit confused.

“I just wanted to say your name.” I said, in the same way that she did a small while ago.

“You’re just way too cute!” Mai exclaimed.

Is this… A ‘normal’ exchange? Even if I try doing the things that mom told me to, I still don’t quite get what I was supposed to be feeling here.

“I’m going to go wild today!” Mai exclaimed.

“Wild…?” I didn’t quite get what she meant.

But as Mai rushed out while pulling my hand, I was unable to keep on wondering about the things that were on my head… I suppose it can’t be helped, let’s think more on it later.